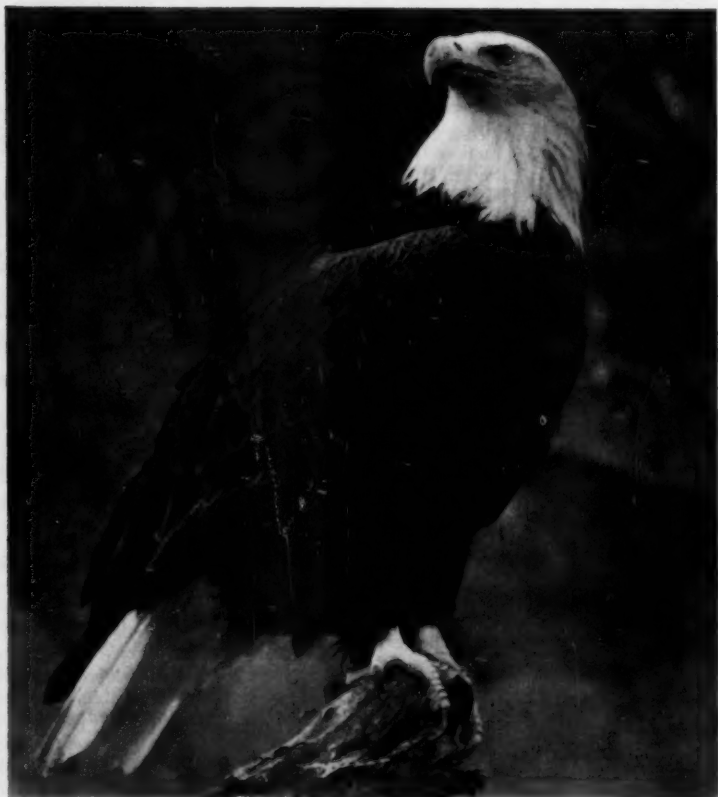


The BULLETIN

OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY



VOLUME XXXVI

JANUARY, 1952

Number 1

MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1896 INCORPORATED 1914

FOR THE PROTECTION OF WILD BIRDS AND MAMMALS

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The Editor solicits the gift of articles, notes, photographs, and sketches, on the various aspects of Nature Lore, Natural Science, and Conservation of Natural Resources. If possible, articles should be typewritten, double-spaced, on one side of the paper. Photographs should be on glossy paper with data attached. The Society is a non-profit educational institution and we offer no remuneration for contributions to the *Bulletin*. The Society assumes no responsibility for the safety of manuscripts or illustrations submitted for its use.

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The President's Page



De Tocqueville and Bryce agreed in reporting the inhabitants of the United States as being naturally lawless, and our treatment of the game laws is evidence of this. Witness the following as described in the Northampton Gazette for November 26, 1951:

"THREE HUNTERS 'JACKED' DEER; ALL THREE PLEAD GUILTY. USED CAR'S HEADLIGHTS AND A FLASHLIGHT. NONE SAID TO HAVE LICENSE. HUNTED OUT OF SEASON.

"Fines of \$150 were imposed in district court today against three hunters for 'jacking' deer yesterday in Westhampton. Pleading guilty were Alfred LaValley, 29, of Ryan Road, Leeds; Everett Blakesley, 24, of Southampton, and Robert Racicot, 17, of West Farms.

"Conservation Officer John J. Broderick said he stopped a light sedan shortly before 4 a.m. yesterday in Westhampton. Blakesley was the operator and in the car was found a loaded shotgun. LaValley admitted shooting at a deer, aided by the beams from a flashlight and the car's headlights, the officer informed Judge Charles J. O'Connor.

"Blakesley and LaValley also admitted shooting a deer on the 15th (of November) and none of the defendants has a license to hunt, according to the officer."

If this dispatch is correct, at least seven laws of the Commonwealth were violated by these men, namely:

Hunting out of season (deer season Dec. 3 to 8, 1951).

Hunting out of hours (hunting allowed between 6:30 A. M. and 5 P. M. only).

Hunting on the Sabbath Day (date of dispatch Nov. 26, offence "yesterday").

Using a "jacklight" when hunting.

Carrying a loaded gun in a vehicle.

Shooting on a public highway.

Hunting without a license.

It would seem that the imposition of the fines was fully justified!

Robert Leakey

Not "Bats In Our Belfry"—Owls!

Night Hunting With A Camera

BY LESLIE CAMPBELL

Photographs by the Author



"Whoa Are Yooou?"

June first, Nineteen Fifty-one, began precisely like any other normal day. My alarm clock went off with a wild jolt at seven in the morning, followed by the usual mad rush of details. By quarter of eight my wife and I had accomplished in forty-five minutes what should have taken much longer, and we were on our way to the Administration Buildings at Quabbin Reservoir, where we arrived without incident. A few moments after our arrival Emory Bartlett approached me and remarked, "Les, I just remembered. Blake Jackson told me that Charlie Sanford had seen an owl in the belfry of the Congregational Church a couple of weeks ago. He wanted to know what kind it could be."

Immediately visions of Barn Owls swept across my mind. Mr. Bartlett must have sensed my excitement. Before I could ask permission, he told me that I could go up to see Blake if I wanted more information, and I promptly departed.

I found Mr. Blake at his little store on Main Street in Belchertown. He could tell me no more than that Charlie Sanford had seen the bird in the belfry and wondered what it might be; however, he told me that I could investigate if I cared to.

Two minutes later I was trying the door of the church. I entered the lobby; it was exceptionally quiet. On both sides were stairs leading upward. Without hesitation I took the nearer one to the balcony overlooking the auditorium. Here I spotted a little door at one side, scarcely eighteen inches wide, opening into a very narrow, dimly-lighted stairway which went steeply upward. I groped my way up these stairs until I could see light ahead, which turned out to be coming from a window on the next landing. I slipped between two rafters (which I did not then notice concealed the dark stairway) onto the landing. Here the atmosphere changed and the dust of years filled my nostrils. Everywhere huge beams and rafters formed intriguing angles and cast ominous shadows. From here I could look to the far end of the church through the maze of timbers which supported the roof. The little daylight that was available came through a small window on this end.

The floor and beams were covered with bird droppings, the accumulation of years of roosting by pigeons and swallows. A dark object in one corner near

the window caught my attention. Could it be an owl pellet? Examination showed it to be about an inch and a half long and three quarters of an inch in diameter, and revealed the bones and fur of two small rodents. By this time my excitement was running high. The pellet proved the presence of an owl of some sort, and it was too large for a Screech Owl.

Hastily I started up the next flight of stairs. As I did so, I was startled by the shuffling and scrambling of clawed feet along dry, resonant wood somewhere in the darkness above me. The noise ended with a loud thump, then all was quiet. As soon as my heart stopped pounding (or was it my knees?) and I regained my breath, I realized that a bird — a large bird — had been present and had departed in haste as I approached.

Quickly I continued up the creaky, shaky stairway, stopping momentarily on a tiny landing to pick up another pellet. The next landing proved to be quite a bit larger but crowded with a room about eight by ten feet which contained the works of the big town clock. A ray of light from the front of the clock room cleared up the bird's exit place, a hole about eight inches by twelve in the face of one of the clock dials.

Another very narrow stairway led nearly straight up to a trap door in the ceiling. As I lifted the door, I was greeted by a rush of cool fresh air. This was the belfry proper, and from here I had a wonderful view of the surrounding countryside. Off in the distance I could see the Quabbin Tower, and below me Belchertown lay nestled amongst the many trees that shaded its streets. Replacing the trap door, I started to descend, and as I did so I noticed that from the top of this stairway I could see, over the top of the clock room, the resting place of the bird I had flushed. The roof of the room was covered with droppings, and several more pellets were scattered about. From here the bird could drop to the exit hole five feet below in one jump (the final thump I had heard) and be gone.

A few pieces of wood were strewn about the roof of the clock room, and about midway lay an old partly-disintegrated burlap bag. I noticed a large primary feather in the far corner and crawled on my hands and knees to get it for positive identification, and then started down again.

I could hardly wait to tell the rest of our local birders of this thrilling discovery, especially Girard Albertine, who had been searching for years for a Barn Owl in every abandoned house or barn he could get into. But suddenly I found myself in a quandary, for nowhere could I see a way down from the third landing! It was probably ten minutes later (it seemed like ten hours) before I finally located a dark hole behind some rafters through which the narrow, steep stairway led down to the balcony.

I slept very little that night. Many things were going through my mind, mostly concerning the welfare of this rare visitor to Belchertown. Should we try to keep it a secret? What would be the minister's reaction to this tenant? the parishioners'? the townspeople's? Would it be possible to photograph the bird? This I wanted to do more than anything else, and I spent many hours this night and during many others planning how to do it.

Dawn came, and with it plans on how to tackle my problem. First, I must see the minister, convince him of the importance of this owl to the community, get him to let it stay, and ask him to put a lock on the belfry door to prevent unnecessary disturbance. Then I must see the editor of our local newspaper and get him to make the townspeople aware of the highly beneficial habits

of this species. Then of course there were the many "birders" who should be contacted so that they could share in watching the novel visitor; and, lastly, I must, *I simply must*, get some photographs of the owl.

Selling the bird's value to the minister proved simple. Both the Reverend Mr. Charrier and his wife turned out to be charming people, already interested in birds. Mr. Charrier quickly responded with a big lock bolted on the belfry door the next morning, but he told me that extensive repairs were to be made on the church later that summer.

Mr. Blackmer, the editor of the local newspaper, was also very co-operative. The problem of interesting the community in this bird's welfare was made easy by describing its feeding habits, which have been quite thoroughly investigated; for example, it has been estimated that one Barn Owl kills on the average four thousand mice in one year! One investigator found that a pair of Barn Owls while feeding their young in the nest will capture as many as forty mice or other small rodents each night over a very considerable period of time. As an experiment a half-grown captive Barn Owl was given all the mice it would eat. It swallowed eight, one after another, and the ninth went down part way, its tail still protruding from the owl's beak. Within three hours the owl was ready for a second meal of four more mice.

What are the destructive possibilities from mice? A population of one hundred field mice to the acre is not unusual. As few as ten mice per acre in a 100-acre tract would consume annually about eleven tons of grass or five and a half tons of hay. The loss throughout the country has been estimated conservatively as more than thirty million dollars. As one biologist described it, "the Barn Owl is the nonpareil of rat traps, never needing baiting, never having to be set. It functions every day, winter and summer, from dusk to dawn, and it has a voracious appetite." And examinations of thousands of Barn Owl pellets reveal very very few traces of birds in its diet.

It is indeed most unfortunate that there still exists a deep-rooted and senseless prejudice against hawks and owls. Many of these birds are still shot or trapped by misinformed people, but there is no excuse for this indiscriminate killing. The Barn Owl is "protected" by law in Massachusetts and most other States, but the law is often flouted.

June fifth arrived without fanfare. On this night I hoped to photograph the owl. Knowing that my entry would probably flush the bird, I summoned all the birders I could and planned to enter the belfry about half an hour before dark so that they might see the bird in good light as it flew away. My plan was to focus my camera on the opening through which the owl entered and when it returned, to touch off my flash.

When I reached the landing below the clock room, I heard the shuffle of claws as the bird left and the excited comments of the friends outside. I gave a sigh of relief and started up the next flight. As I did so, another mad scramble of clawed feet resounded through the building. I glanced upward and glimpsed a whitish form as it dropped with a thud to the exit hole and disappeared outside. "Holy smoke! there are two owls," I thought, and I raced skyward. I reached the top of the last stairway quite out of breath. Hastily I swung my flashlight over the top of the clock room, and there on the old piece of burlap was a white egg! I guess I must have flown down to tell the good news! At least, I have no recollection of my descent. I only remember bursting out of the door of the church yelling "two owls and one egg!" Yes, Belchertown had established a breeding record for Barn Owls, the third

known for western Massachusetts! An amusing twist was added when we learned that the first such record had been in the Congregational Church in Springfield. As the Rev. Mr. Charrier expressed it proudly, "They are Congregational Owls!"

I decided to wait until all the eggs were laid and incubation was well under way before attempting any photographs. I planned to check the owls' progress every four days and each time to bring with me a piece of equipment to install, to reduce the number of visits and to disturb the birds as little as possible. On June ninth I entered the church at 8:45 P. M. and made my way upwards to the clock room. Many members of the Quabbin and Allen Bird Clubs were watching as the birds left. I fully expected to find another egg, but the count still remained at one only.

June fourteenth was the next check day. It was a very wet, cold, and stormy day, and a day of tragedy for us. At ten o'clock word came to me that a man who had been commissioned by the town to keep the clock running had decided to do some work on the clock that morning. In spite of being warned that he would disturb the owls, he went up! I knew that he would not be there more than an hour or so, but what I did not know was whether the birds would return to the nest when he left, or wait until dark. And as I glanced at the thermometer my heart sank, for it did not go over fifty-three all day.

That night as I made my way up those shaky stairs, I think I would have given almost anything I owned to hear the familiar thud as I reached the third landing, but no sound was heard. There were two eggs, both stone cold!

The next twelve days went smoothly. During this time it was a common sight to see from three to forty persons with their eyes glued to the tiny hole in the clock dial, all hoping for a glimpse of our weird visitors when darkness lowered and the birds set forth to render their great services to mankind.

By June twenty-sixth the total had reached six eggs, but on this day only one bird flushed when I made my routine check, and this bothered me. Checks on July first, third, and sixth showed only one bird present, with no further increase in the number of eggs. I feared my flushing the birds in fairly good light (so that the birders, always present, might see them well), might have unduly disturbed the birds.

On July first I started taking pictures. I had installed a pair of curtains to hide my presence on the stairway, some six feet from the nest. I had set up a dummy camera and flash reflectors, which I now replaced with the real articles. I also had a 10-inch photoflood with a 500-watt bulb located near the nest and plugged it into the electric circuit in the clock room. This was needed in focusing my camera, a 4 x 5 Graflex with f.5.6, 7½-inch auto diaphragm ektar lens, and a roll film adapter loaded with 120 ektachrome. From previous experience I thought the owl would return in about ten minutes, and I had barely focused the camera and seated myself, quite uncomfortably, when a loud thud at the entrance hole announced the owl's return. For a long ten minutes after that thud everything was dead silence save my loudly beating heart and noisy breathing.

I was now in total darkness. A scramble of feet along a beam off to my left told me the owl had left the entrance and was coming nearer. Again silence, this time for a shorter period, until another thump accompanied by a rattle of wood told me she had landed on one of the blocks of wood on the



top of the clock room. Silence for five more minutes, then the sound of clawed feet as she walked toward the nest. Again silence, which seemed endless. I listened intently for signs of her settling on the eggs, but I could not detect the slightest hint of this. I seemed to feel her eyes upon me, even though I knew I was hidden from her by an opaque curtain. Certainly, I thought, such uncanny vision as she possessed to enable her to fly around in this place where I could see absolutely nothing would enable her to penetrate a mere piece of cloth.

Time dragged. I could not tell if she were on the nest. My position was becoming unbearable. I was chagrined to think that in all my planning I had not thought of a comfortable seat for myself. To judge the length of an hour in total darkness and silence is an impossibility. I held out until I no longer could feel anything in my right leg, then slowly moved my hand toward the camera shutter a few inches away. As I touched it, my heart leaped at the familiar noisy scrambling of feet followed by the characteristic thud as she dropped to the exit hole, and I realized I had frightened her away without getting a picture. Too late I attached a piece of cord to the shutter release so that I would not have to move my hand the next time, and then tried to find a more comfortable position.

It was probably not more than ten minutes before the bird returned, following the same procedure as on her previous visit. I waited for what seemed hours until my leg was again senseless, then slowly tightened the tension on the string. This was to be my big moment, but alas! — instead of the click of the shutter and a shattering flash, I felt the string slip and fall into my lap, then followed the scramble of claws, the thud, the dead silence!

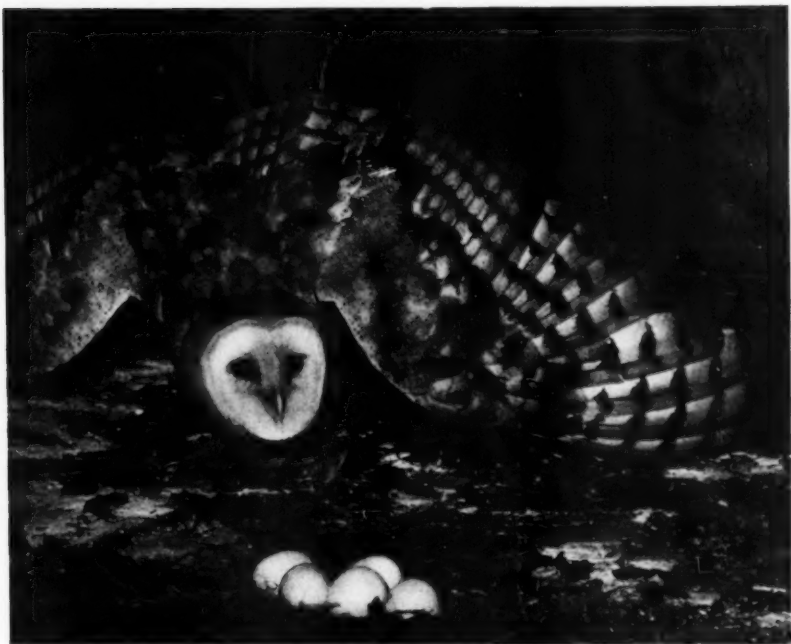
I made my way slowly down from the disappointment of the night. I stepped out into the fresh cool night air. It felt good, but somehow I found myself seeming to develop a fondness for the dusty atmosphere of the belfry. It was 11:45 P. M. as I sat down on the parish house steps to ponder many things. At midnight a silent white form materialized out of the darkness overhead, glistened as the light of a street light caught it, and disappeared into the face of the clock. Heaving a sigh of relief, I headed home at last.

The next night I returned full of determination. The bird left promptly as I entered at nine o'clock. Deciding to wait in the clock room, I attached a longer cord securely to the shutter, drew up a chair, and made myself comfortable in the doorway almost directly below my camera.

The owl returned on schedule, and fifty minutes later I pulled the string; a click, a blinding flash, and I had my picture! That is, provided everything went well and the bird did not have her back toward the camera. It was a few minutes before I came out of my temporary trance enough to realize that the bird had not left the nest. Amazing! After a few moments of silence I thought of the switch which turned on the photoflood near the nest. I reached for it as quietly as possible and turned on the light. I was all set for the mad scramble, but none occurred. I finally flushed the owl by rustling my clothing, which I found frightened her more than other noises like the creaking of my chair or occasional bangs on the wall, sounds which are perhaps more normal in an ancient building swayed by the wind. It was hard to account for the bird's apparent indifference to my flashbulbs or the 500-watt photoflood located near the nest, but it opened up new possibilities, for it made it possible for me to see the bird and take pictures when the composition of the picture suited me. In order to see the bird from the clock room, I arranged, with Don Sampson's help, a small mirror near the camera, so that from this spot I could have an excellent view of the nest area, though I had to look nearly straight up at the mirror to use it.

It was four days later before I again returned to try for more pictures. Only one Barn Owl had been seen for the past twelve days. Many people had expressed concern, and I feared that my flushing it in good light, so that people could see it well, had perhaps made it too well known to some person who did not appreciate owls. However, I realized that on three nights I had stayed until midnight and flushed the female several times, only to have her return each time in less than twenty minutes, and with no indication that she was hunting for food. This led me to the conclusion that the male was probably still present and was perhaps feeding his mate after midnight, when his own hunger had been appeased. The weather had been very hot, and he might prefer to spend his days sleeping in the cool shade of some dense evergreen rather than in the stuffy belfry. I determined to settle the point if it took all night.

As usual the female returned about 9:20 P. M. When she was settled on the nest, I turned on the floodlight. There, at what in the mirror seemed only arm's length, was the most beautiful bird I had ever seen, bar none, sitting broadside but looking straight at the camera. My first impression was of a weirdly grotesque bird with staring dark brown eyes deeply set in a white heart-shaped face edged with pale orange. The under parts were a soft snow-white, flecked with small black spots on the breast. Above she was a blue-gray and medium orange blended in an over all pattern, except her barred wing and tail feathers. A very colorful bird.



In about fifteen minutes the owl stood up and stretched, and I tightened the shutter string. She lowered her head and stared at the camera, which at that moment went off with a blinding flash. She just kept staring at the camera, or perhaps at the photoflood, and I stared at her, fascinated.

During the next hour she changed her position on the eggs several times, and at 10:30 P. M. I decided to flush her and make ready for another exposure. I turned off the floodlight and made noises to induce her to leave before I made my changes.

Soon she returned. Time sped by. Suddenly she began hissing excitedly! A loud mouselike, squeaky, chippering noise came from without, followed by a thud at the entrance hole, and then noise coming from within! I was almost beside myself with excitement and happiness, for I sensed that it was the male coming in. I dared not turn off the photoflood for fear of alarming the returning bird. Finally the male flew to a beam at the left and then to the clock room roof. Now the female was quite excited and was hissing almost continuously, the male squeaking occasionally.

I couldn't see him, but I knew where he was. Would she leave the nest and go to him, or would he come to her? I watched intently, but I had not long to wait. He hopped down and walked to the female, then presented her with a dead mole, which she quickly took and held in her beak while he immediately proceeded to mate with her.

I wanted desperately to get a photograph of the pair together and was disappointed when he started to leave. Fortunately he took only two steps, then turned and faced the female, who still held the mole in her bill. I pulled hard on the string. The male whirled and stared at the camera just as both

flashbulbs split the air! My wish had come true. Both birds froze with the flash but soon relaxed, and the female began gulping at the mole while the male walked out of my field of view in the small mirror. Then he dropped down to a beam just two feet from my right foot and looked straight at me. I wanted to stop breathing but I didn't dare! For a long ten minutes he stared at me before dropping into the darkness below. Then he flew to the further end of the garret, where he rested for about an hour before plunging into the night outside.

This was about 1:30 A. M., but I waited another hour before flushing the female and making my departure. I removed the exposed film and made my way down. My watch told me that I had been in the belfry five hours, but my mind told me I had been there but a moment, one of the most exciting moments of my life. I waited on the parish house steps, as I always did, but it was thirty-five minutes before the female returned, quickly followed by the male bringing a small mammal in his beak.

During the next week I spent five out of seven nights with the owls. Usually it was between one and two o'clock in the morning when I left their home for mine, but one night I heard the robins beginning their carols as I left the church. That was the final straw with my, until now, patient and understanding wife. She was waiting for me when I arrived home, and I learned right then that playing second fiddle to a Barn Owl was not her idea of joy. I tried boldly to inform her that this was a very unusual case; I had *owls* in the *belfry*! She quickly tallied with the cunning typical of her sex: "You are quite right, darling, that you are an unusual case. Most people have *bats* in their *belfry*!" I still haven't figured an answer to that one, but nothing could dim the memory of that thrilling night for me.

By now both the owls were so accustomed to the photoflood that they came and went with the light turned on, making it possible for me to stay upstairs with them. The female especially became used to a lot of queer noises from my corner. I could stand up and stretch, change the film in my camera, even talk to her (which I frequently did), but if I should drop anything to the floor eight feet below she would leave immediately. One night I decided to try changing flashbulbs which were located in front of the photofloods. Her reaction was immediate but unexpected. Instead of making off in haste, she tried "bluffing." I watched in awe as this small owl expanded to almost unbelievable proportions. Spreading her wings to their full extent with their width tilted toward me and fanning her tail and ruffling her body feathers, she lowered her head and swung it slowly back and forth, hissing loudly like the safety valve of a radiator letting out steam, and presented a really formidable appearance. I changed the flashbulb without flushing her, and slowly she contracted to her original dimensions and appearance. I could hardly believe my eyes, but, quickly focusing my camera, I stuck my hand out again, and as she assumed her "bluffing" position I squeezed the shutter release, with the result shown in the picture of the female owl. The male never became quite so inured to noise or movement.

Unfortunately the contractor who was to renovate the church visited the belfry one day and frightened the incubating female away, and the eggs were badly chilled. I continued to make almost nightly visits to the nest, and the bird continued to incubate, but no eggs were hatched. Finally, on July eighteenth, the female apparently gave up in despair, for she was last seen on that night, when she came into the belfry, inspected the eggs, and departed within

a few minutes. An hour later the male was heard "squeaking" but was not seen then or at any later time.

Though my Belchertown Barn Owls were unsuccessful in rearing a family, their presence bore fruit in another way. During their short stay they aroused the interest of a whole community. Thanks to Mr. Blackmer and the Sentinel, the community learned a great deal about the valuable feeding habits of these much-maligned birds, and this we hope will lead to a better understanding of many others of our bird neighbors. And I personally learned much of interest concerning these visitors and succeeded in getting some fine photographs. My pictures were exhibited in the front window of one of our Main Street stores and also received considerable space on the front pages of three newspapers serving the general area. My Barn Owls have played a very definite role in spreading the gospel of conservation of wildlife, a success which may mean more to the future welfare of the owl tribe than if all their eggs had hatched and the young had grown to maturity.

The Editors of the *Bulletin* take pleasure in allotting first place in Volume XXXVI to this interesting personal narration of our fellow member, Leslie Campbell, because:

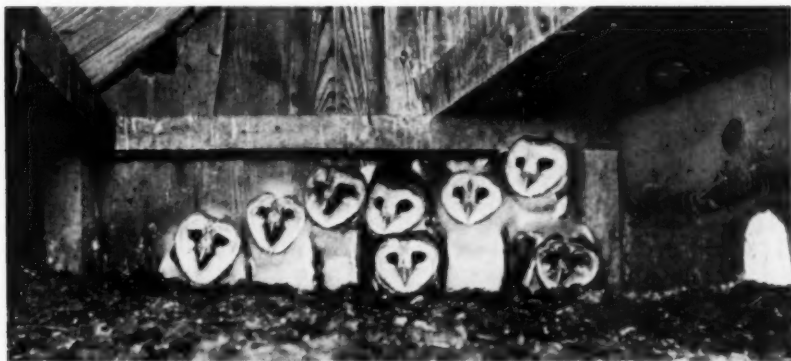
It reflects the enthusiasm of the typical bird-watcher in these enlightened days, when birds are studied in the field rather than in the closet.

It demonstrates the rewards which await the patience and perseverance of those who go "hunting with a camera" rather than a lethal gun.

It brings out briefly the economic value of birds and the importance of their conservation.

It shows the results accruing from well-directed "public relations" endeavors.

We look forward optimistically to the return of the Belchertown Barn Owls in 1952 and to more pictures and notes from Mr. Campbell. May their tribe increase as did these Barn Owls on Marthas Vineyard, photographed by the late George D. Eustis.



Some Notes From Martha's Vineyard.

BY GUY EMERSON



S. A. GRIMES

Carolina Wren at Nest

Two birds have shown a substantial increase in numbers on the Island since 1939, the Carolina Wren and the Northern Parula Warbler.

I have recently checked with my neighbor Mrs. Seth Wakeman. Both of us have records from June to August, 1939, in the same location, the extensive estate of Roger Baldwin at Chilmark. Here a lovely brook winds through thick undergrowth and tall maples for a mile or more.

In 1941 a single Carolina Wren was recorded in November. In 1942 two birds were recorded in the same location, and another singing during

the summer in Chilmark Center, about a mile west of "Windygates," the Baldwin place. In 1943 there were what appeared to be two pairs at "Windygates" (we have not actually seen a nest) and a singing bird also at the Center. That same year I recorded two birds calling and singing in late December. Up to 1949 the population appeared to remain static. We found none outside of Chilmark, but from 1949 to the present year, 1951, there has been a sharp increase in numbers, and an extension of area. During June, July, and August of 1951 I recorded thirteen singing birds in twelve locations covering an area ten miles long, from Chilmark Center to the Edgartown line along the south shore of the Island, and about three miles wide. On October 28-30 I heard one call at "Windygates," one was on my place three miles to the eastward, two were in a woodpile at the King place one half mile east, and another on the North Road about three miles north of us.

The Carolina Wren is certainly a lively and welcome addition to our local fauna. Each year we fear that a cold winter will be fatal to the birds.* But there have been several rather severe winters since 1939, and I am hopeful that this species has become acclimated and established as a new resident of the Vineyard. There is certainly an abundance of underbrush and swampy cover on the Island, providing food and ideal protection for the birds.

*The winters of 1949, 1950 and 1951 were very mild in Massachusetts, and this period coincides with the increase of the Carolina Wren on the Vineyard. In his *Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States*, Volume III, pp. 337-338, Forbush writes: "During the summers succeeding mild winters, the number of Carolina Wrens increases in the middle states and northward and many young or unmated birds wander into northern states. During the next severe winter most of these birds succumb to cold and starvation. . . . In 1907, 1908 and 1909 the wrens appeared in unprecedented numbers in New England. . . . In the winter of 1911-12 heavy snow remained on the ground for a long time and this was followed by another decrease in the numbers of the birds. . . . Probably the species will never become generally common here." EDITORS.

Our records for the Parula Warbler somewhat parallel those for the Wren. Mr. Baldwin has records at "Windygates" fully twenty years ago (it is on his place that the Barn Owls have nested for more than twenty years), and he reports that the bird remained all summer. Its favorite moss (*Usnea*) is present in good supply on the Baldwin place. For some years our June-August records were confined to the Baldwin area and numbered three or four pairs, but in 1948 I heard a Parula singing during July and early August in an oak woodland area bordering the salt meadow five miles to the south. I could find no *usnea* moss in the vicinity, but I note that Peterson says "breeds mainly in humid woodlands where *usnea* (bearded) moss or Spanish moss hangs from the trees (but also in some regions where neither is found)." This location was distinctly dry and not humid, and a pair of birds spent the nesting season there.

From 1949 to 1951 our records increased. On Tea Lane and along the North Road, where there are many swampy woodlands, and in some places also *usnea* moss, the bird appears to have established itself. During June-August, 1951, I recorded singing Parulas in eleven different places, in substantially the same area, five miles by three, into which the Carolina Wren has spread.

I am not much of a nest-hunter, but during the summer I walk in this area every day, rain or shine, and it is not difficult to spot locations where a bird is singing, and where it remains for the duration of the nesting season. In most cases I saw more than one bird in each of the locations. The presumed nesting warbler population of the area includes ten species, as follows: Black and White, Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided, Yellow, Parula, Pine, Prairie, Oven-bird, Yellowthroat, and Redstart.

As a matter of additional interest I might mention my visit to the Island, October 28-30, 1951. With William Leigh, who lives in Chilmark all the year, I spent two mornings in the field, in Chilmark, Gay Head, and Menemsha. We observed sixty-six species. An immature Red-headed Woodpecker was my first for Martha's Vineyard, although I have an unconfirmed report of a nesting pair some years ago. In a swamp not far from "Windygates" we found a male and female Dickcissel (I have found them twice before in the same spot). On the 27th we saw three Cory's Shearwaters flying south over the ocean. Later we went to Menemsha, and over the Sound were at least thirty of this species, some flying within ten feet of the shore. They are certainly magnificent fliers. They sailed close to the waves, and a dozen times we saw them do what can only be called "belly-landings," deftly glancing along the top of the water and evidently scooping up food. On the 29th the birds were still there in the same numbers. Joining the party were a dozen Gannets with their breath-taking dives, also Common and Red-throated Loons, two Horned Grebes, and a Dovekie.

Ducks seemed somewhat more plentiful than last year. On Squibnocket Pond, together with 150 Canada Geese, there were a dozen varieties of ducks, the most numerous being Ruddy (100), Widgeon (75), Black (50). On Black Point Pond were Widgeon (75), their favorite haunt; also 100 American Coot and 41 Pied-billed Grebes. No Canvas-backs and only one Red-head. Old hunters tell me that twenty-five years ago, before the eelgrass died out, Canvas-backs and Redheads gathered in numbers aggregating ten to fifteen thousand. Times change, but the Vineyard is still a rewarding and delightful island.

Nature's Calendar—January

BY RICHARD HEADSTROM

January can be regarded as a transition period, a time of quiet and repose, when nature rests and living things sleep, to renew their energies for another year of activity.

And yet, though January finds the nature year at its lowest ebb, the month is not entirely without interest. Now the most conspicuous living elements on the landscape, the trees, divested of their leafy splendor, reveal, in their nakedness, their distinctive identities. Silhouetted against the sky, the feathery brushlike head of the birch is clearly defined, and the curled-in branches of the flowering dogwood become more apparent and its twigs, studded with curious turban-shaped flower buds, a definitive character. Even the poplar is seen to have a powdery skin, and the shaggy hickory seems shaggier than ever, while the retiring hop hornbeam bravely puts forth a bold front with its hoplike fruit clusters.

The trees, too, soften the rugged beauty of the wintry landscape with tints of color. On the distant landscape, the evergreens provide a decorative background for winter's stage, while nearer at hand the twigs of the red maple relieve the bleak prospect of woodland swamp. Along the roadside, the dark-blue fruit of the tupelo cheers a strolling wanderer, and as the sun sinks in the western sky the beech casts purple shadows on the snowy forest floor to delight the artist's eye.

No less than the trees, the shrubs, too, contribute their share in trimmings of scarlet pennants, coral lanterns, and knobby buttons of blue and gray. But aside from their aesthetic value, they have a more practical purpose in providing food for birds brave enough to battle biting winds and swirling snow.

The birds of winter, though fewer in number than in summer, are more conspicuous, since naked branches offer no hidden retreats. Except for the Snow Bunting, which habitually seeks open fields far from all cover, and the Crow, Starling, and Northern Shrike, which are birds of open country, our winter birds prefer sheltered places. Wherever there are trees, Chickadees, nuthatches, and woodpeckers search industriously for countless insects in crevices of bark, but Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers, more selective, seek the refuge of oak and maple woods. Of necessity crossbills haunt stands of coniferous trees, but Pine Grosbeaks may be found wherever seeds and fruits are abundant. In weedy fields Goldfinches, Juncos, and Tree Sparrows search for seeds on withered stalks of goldenrods, asters, and other herbaceous plants, but Goldfinches also frequent birch and alder swamps to keep Redpolls and Purple Finches company, while the Juncos often retire to hemlock groves for shelter from searching winds and driving snow. But the Tree Sparrows, unmindful of the raging elements, remain where brown stalks of weeds and grasses stand in phalanxes against the sky and in merry frolic fly from one patch to another, their gay notes falling upon the air like the tinkling of sleigh bells.

In the orchard Cedar Waxwings hunt for fruit still suspended from branch and twig, and in the roadside thickets Blue Jays, their color matching the winter sky and their shrill cries sounding like frozen music, dart about with mischievous abandon. On distant seashore Ipswich Sparrows and Horned Larks run about in merry companies, and on still unfrozen ponds and lakes Horned Grebes, Redheads, and Canvas-backs swim about with quiet dignity.

The Black Bear, Woodchuck, and Chipmunk are asleep in snug retreats, but other mammals venture abroad by day or night. Squirrels are much in evidence, and occasionally a Red Fox may be seen. The dainty prints of a Deer Mouse in the snow about a patch of rosebushes suggests that the little rodent found good cheer in the hips, while in the woods, far from water, the tracks of a Mink serve notice that streams are frozen over. Where the bark has been stripped from sumacs, the Cottontail Rabbit has been at work, and as a freeze quickly succeeds a thaw the runways of the Meadow Mice etch a tracery on the frozen ground.

In a moldering log a lone cricket or grasshopper waits for spring to come, snails are recluses behind closed doors, and Wood Frogs, Spring Peepers, and toads slumber beneath the leaf mold. Fresh-water mussels lie dormant beneath the ice, fishes rest in the deeper parts of ponds and lakes, and water spiders nap in a bubble of air. Earthworms are curled in tangled balls deep in the ground, and potato and asparagus beetles rest in burrows beneath the frost line. On warm days ladybugs and flies may venture forth from hidden recesses in barns and houses, but the caterpillars of moths and butterflies refuse to be tempted and remain in secluded nooks or await their final transformation within the protection of cocoon or chrysalid.

Birds Want Water Even in Winter

BY PHILIP B. HEYWOOD

For years Mrs. Heywood and I have been feeding birds from all sorts of feeding devices, and we have also maintained drinking and bathing places as well. For the past few seasons we have been using an electric water-warmer on a window sill feeding-shelf at our home in Worcester, Massachusetts, throughout our cold New England winters.

Much to our surprise we have noticed of late that many more birds seem to be coming to our feeders than were attracted in former years. We have become convinced that many birds visit our place to get a drink of water when the weather is very cold and most sources of drinking water are frozen and unavailable. We have often noticed that birds fly down to this particular shelf, where we have placed an aluminum pie plate with a "water-warmer" in it. Although there is always a bountiful supply of Moose Hill special bird food on the feeding tray, many of the birds take a drink and then fly off into the bushes and trees without eating any of the food offered them.

If our observations are correct (and we think they are), many of our friends who feed birds in winter may like to try out the experiment of keeping water on tap and unfrozen so that their bird visitors may obtain a drink whenever they so desire.

The water-warmer we use is about five inches long and about one inch in diameter. We ran an electric cord from a droplight in the cellar out through a hole drilled in the frame of a cellar window directly under our feeding shelf, and the warmer is attached to the outside of the house. The warming unit rests in the water, where we "let nature take its course." Even in zero weather at least half the water in the pie plate remains unfrozen, and I am sure the birds are very grateful for the chance to have a drink whenever they wish.

NOTE: The Smith-Gates water-warmer used by the Heywoods is available at Audubon House. Ed.

PROGRAM

Annual Meeting

Massachusetts Audubon Society

Saturday, January 26, 1952 Horticultural Hall, Boston

JUDGE ROBERT WALCOTT presiding

Afternoon Session

- 2:00 WOOD DUCKS IN MASSACHUSETTS. Motion Picture in Color. Presented by Daniel Grice, Wildlife Photographer, State Department of Conservation.
- 2:30 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING.
- 3:00 THE MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY IN SCHOOL, CAMP, AND RECREATION PROGRAM. Illustrated with kodachromes. Members of Educational Staff and representatives from school, camp, and workshop.
- 3:45 Pause to get acquainted. See the exhibits. Opportunity to confer with Audubon staff.
- 4:15 SANCTUARY ON THE IPSWICH RIVER. Our newest Audubon Sanctuary. Kodachromes. Comment by Elmer P. Foye, Sanctuary Director.
- 4:30 AS THE HAWKS FLY. Robert Welker, of Harvard University, will present some of his latest color shots.
- 4:45 BANDING IN THE BERKSHIRES. Illustrated with kodachromes. Alvah W. Sanborn, Director, Pleasant Valley Sanctuary.
- 5:00 A COLORFUL YEAR. Selected kodachromes by Audubon members.
- 5:30 to 6:45. EVENING SNACK. Motor Canteen at Horticultural Hall.

Evening Session

- 7:00 ORNITHOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS OF 1951. *South Shore Bird Life*, Sibley Higginbotham; *Audubon Trips and Campouts*, Roderic W. Sommers; *A Whimbrel Sighted on Cape Cod*, Wallace Bailey; *The Winter Finch Invasion*, Dorothy E. Snyder; *Brookline Bird Club Weekly Trips*, James T. Kelly; *New England Bird Records*, Henry M. Parker; *Landscape of the Birds*, Eleanor E. Barry.
- 7:45 "THE LOON'S NECKLACE." Color film with effective background music and narrative, bringing to life with ceremonial masks a charming Indian legend.
- 8:00 FOLLOWING THE BIRDS IN WESTERN EUROPE. Kodachromes. Roger Tory Peterson, author and artist, Chevy Chase, Md.

Hostesses

Mrs. Donald C. Alexander	Mrs. Ludlow Griscom	Mrs. Lawrence K. Miller
Mrs. Clarence E. Allen	Mrs. Philip B. Heywood	Mrs. Alva Morrison
Mrs. Oakes I. Ames	Miss Louisa Hunnewell	Mrs. James F. Nields, Jr.
Mrs. Elliott B. Church	Mrs. Edwin C. Johnson	Mrs. John Richardson
Mrs. G. W. Cottrell, Jr.	Mrs. Ralph Lawson	Mrs. Frederick A. Saunders
Mrs. Lee W. Court	Mrs. C. Russell Mason	Mrs. Robert Walcott
Mrs. Roger Ernst	Mrs. John B. May	Mrs. Sydney M. Williams
Mrs. Maxwell E. Foster	Mrs. Rosario Mazzeo	

Annual Winter Field Trip — January 27

(See notice elsewhere in *Bulletin*)

The Elizabeth Islands Revisited

July 17-20, 1951

BY ELLIOTT B. CHURCH, C. E. GOODWIN, AND M. S. SHAUB



M. S. SHAUB

A Common Tern on its Nest

row chain known as the Elizabeth Islands that stretches for fifteen miles southwesterly from Woods Hole. This was Cuttyhunk in the town of Gosnold, which embraces the picturesquely named eight islands of the group:

“Nonamesset, Uncatena
Naushon and Nashawena
Weepecket, Pasquenese
Cuttyhunk and Penikese.”

Cuttyhunk was all that we had imagined and much more. The senior author had stopped here briefly in July, 1932, with Francis H. Allen, when they also visited Penikese and Nashawena, and he had been anxious to return to enjoy more fully the uniqueness of this isolated bit of the south shore of Massachusetts.

The little town of Cuttyhunk nestles on the rocky hillside and is dominated by the imposing stone and shingled dwelling of the late Mr. William M. Wood and by the white Methodist church. The town boasts a post office, general store, school, library, several hotels, a cafe, and about thirty houses of varying sizes and architecture; but many of the summer visitors stay on board their yachts anchored in Cuttyhunk Pond. This is the haven of striped bass fishermen, who since 1865 have come for surf casting and made the Cuttyhunk Club their headquarters. This organization is now non-existent and the buildings are used as a private summer residence, but many paintings of the activities of the early days and records of fish landed can still be seen in the old clubhouse. The island was formerly one of the important centers of lobstering on the Massachusetts coast, but the industry has declined because of the rapid disappearance of the crustaceans in recent years. This fact is attested by piles of weather-beaten lobster pots and many-colored buoys on and near the fish pier.

Captain “Slim” cut the engine of the *Alert* as he guided his boat skillfully through the narrow channel from Cuttyhunk Harbor into the inner harbor, or Cuttyhunk Pond. A small gathering on the wharf greeted the passengers in the drizzle of a northeaster and excitedly watched the unloading of a new refrigerator and many cases of milk and groceries. A strange assortment of vehicles whisked everyone shortly from the dock to the town. This was Cuttyhunk, the outermost of the long nar-

At present little bass fishing is done from the rocky coast, and the picturesque "stands" consisting of precarious catwalks of planks from boulder to boulder out into the surf are no longer seen. In their stead the sturdy bass boats are employed, and the increase of tautog and scup fishing has helped the local Tiltons, Halls, and Bosworths to eke out a living by taking out fishing parties day and night, the latter time being most desirable for stripers. The bass are packed in large iceboxes; and at any time one may view a dozen of these beauties ranging up to thirty pounds each. The largest specimen of the season weighed fifty-seven pounds and the all-time record, seventy-two pounds.

We made our headquarters at the Bosworth House, a cozy and old-fashioned lodging where nine and eleven leaves in long tables made for informality among the guests. The television aerial was ready to be installed, but the music box supplied much more appropriate entertainment during meals.

Although a seaplane calls almost hourly from Mattapoisett and the mainland is easily visible across Buzzards Bay on clear days, one feels far away from the noise and confusion of cities. There is nothing here to attract the tourist looking for entertainment but everything for the lover of great distances — rugged coast lines, colorful red cliffs of Gay Head across Vineyard Sound to the southeast, the flashing of lighthouses and lightships, and the picturesqueness of the tiny village at night with no street lights.

From many angles the Elizabeth Islands are unique. Bartholomew Gosnold, in the ship *Concord*, landed in May, 1602, on Cuttyhunk and built a house on Gosnold Island in Gosnold Pond at the western end of Cuttyhunk. He had intended to leave part of his crew as a permanent settlement when he sailed on June 13 of the same year for England, but none could be prevailed upon to stay. This first attempted settlement in New England is commemorated by a monument of local stones on the tiny islet. Cuttyhunk is also famous for the twisted, handlaid linen fishline of the same name which was manufactured by the Ashaway Line and Twine Manufacturing Company in Ashaway, Rhode Island, during the 1860's. The Cuttyhunk Club's president, Judge McGowen, requested that these lines be named after the club; and thus the first Cuttyhunk line came into being. Penikese was for some years the location of a leper colony which was discontinued in the early 1920's, and the buildings were torn down. Sheep raising was carried on extensively on most of the islands in the early days and a certain amount of limited farming, but the main occupation has always been fishing of one kind or another, and the harbors of the islands served as excellent havens for sailing ships in the heyday of the clipper ships and coastwise schooners. Shipping records for 1851 reveal that in three months a total of 6,676 vessels passed Cuttyhunk and included 132 ships, 544 brigs, 4991 schooners, 954 sloops, and 5 steamers — a remarkable number in the light of present-day shipping records.

Our particular reason for a visit to the islands was to study the natural history, and especially the birds, and to see some of the old trees on Naushon that have remained undisturbed since colonial days. The hour-and-a-half trip from New Bedford aboard the old motor boat, the *Alert*, had landed us at Cuttyhunk in time for a hearty lunch of clam chowder and striped bass. The rain of the early morning had finally stopped, and with the breaking away of the clouds we decided to make a tour of the island to see what it had to offer. Tree and Barn Swallows swooped over us as we walked up the grassy road to the highest elevation, 154 feet, surmounted by a Coast Guard tower.



Sketch Map of the Elizabeth Islands

From this vantage point we had a fine view of the whole island and the chain of the Elizabeth Islands stretching toward Woods Hole. Old gun emplacements on the two knobs of the hill indicate the importance of the location as a strategic outpost during World War II. From the highest points we walked westward between kettle-holes partially filled with water. A Belted Kingfisher flew across searching in vain for food in the temporary ponds. After crossing rough terrain covered with running blackberry, bayberry, sweet everlasting, and dwarf sumac, we headed for the shore by way of swamps thick with cinnamon and marsh ferns.

The shingle beach of the west coast consists of boulders of all sizes, remarkably rounded by the action of the waves of the open ocean. The beach becomes more sandy as one approaches Gosnold Pond, providing a suitable feeding ground for Spotted Sandpipers and Dowitchers. The brackish pond, a little over a half mile long and a quarter mile wide at its widest point, opens northward into the sea through a tiny channel which is easily crossed only at low tide. The monument to Gosnold stands on the small islet, but transportation to this famous site is not readily available. The shores of the pond did not reveal much of especial interest besides goosefoot, seaside goldenrod, black nightshade, white yarrow, *Hypericum mutilum*, beach pea, and narrow-leaved cattail. Bird life offered little besides the ever-present Song Sparrow and common Towhee, with an occasional elusive warbler in the thickets.

The western tip of the island formerly had a lighthouse, of which only the foundations remain, making a habitat for the round-leaved mallow. Common Terns and Herring Gulls passed occasionally, searching hopefully for small fish. The coast becomes more rugged here and the cliffs of the south and east

shores are quite precipitous in places. The boulders increase in size and numbers, and here and there one can see conspicuous outcrops of the gray clay which has been fashioned by a number of potters into artistic dishes and bowls that can be purchased in the town. A good dirt road skirts the shore, leading back to the cemetery on the edge of town. As on other parts of the island, trees of any size are absent and the common wildflowers of sandy coasts are very evident: milkwort; Queen Anne's lace; red, white, yellow, and pussy clover; bouncing Bet; vetch; wild rose; and *Rosa rugosa*. The denser growth of the interior provided cover for the Savannah Sparrow and Goldfinch and the cattail swamps a typical habitat for the Red-wing. Bobolinks and Robins were found close to habitations and also one Black-billed Cuckoo.

The second day we arranged with Bob Tilton to take us to Naushon in his seaworthy bass boat. He assured us that at Tarpaulin Cove on the southeast side of the island we would be able to land easily at an old dock. A northeast wind portended bad weather, but as we skirted the shores of Nashawena and Pasque the clouds broke away and the steep cliffs and wooded swales of Naushon stood out clearly against the blue sky. Rounding the south chop and past the little lighthouse, we entered Tarpaulin Cove with its lovely sweep of sandy beach and wooded cliffs to the north. As the dock proved not to connect with the land it was necessary to wade ashore.

Although our presence on the island was not questioned by two horse-back riders or the summer occupants of the old farmhouse, we were glad to have had a letter from Mr. Edward Forbes welcoming us, as the area was well posted. This the owners had felt necessary after last winter's terrible depletion of the deer population by poachers. On the southwest shore of the cove stands the picturesque old homestead formerly the shepherd's home in the days of extensive sheep raising. Because fences are not needed sheep raising still proves to be a profitable means of land use here.

We had lunch near the lighthouse, with a wonderful view of the cove and the cliffs of Gay Head across the sound, and we found rose mallows and narrow-leaved cattails growing in a little marsh near by. From the lighthouse we walked across open fields containing numerous kettle-holes and separated from one another by picturesque walls. Song Sparrows and Towhees were common here as on Cuttyhunk and other birds to be expected in such a habitat: Kingbird, Blue Jay, Robin, and Catbird. White clover, thistle, and mullein, as well as sheep and lady sorrel, grew in abundance in the fields; and marsh, sensitive, and hay-scented ferns in the moister swales. Here and there were great clumps of lush bayberry and an occasional stunted wild cherry. The Red-eyed Vireo was added to our list here. Less than a half mile west of the lighthouse we entered the woods, the fringes of which had many beeches damaged by violent storms. One old-timer lifted its silvery weathered branches to frame the distant view of walled fields, old farmhouse, and blue water of Tarpaulin Cove.

Considering the poor glacial soil that supports them, the woods are remarkable indeed, with fine old beeches fifty feet or more in height. The bridge trail passes through their shade and close to Blaney's Pond, which offers a variation in botanical habitats. Here we found the round-leaved sundew and downy violets and many sedges and water-loving plants. A Kingfisher flew across the pond, and the Chickadee and Flicker made themselves heard in the oaks. Cedars grew here and there around the margins of the pond and provided nesting spots for warblers in their usnea-draped branches. A little



M. S. SHAUB

View of Tern Colony Nesting Site on northeast side of Penikese Island

beyond the pond the trail branches several times, and the traveler unfamiliar with the various paths on the island could easily become confused as far as directions are concerned. The beeches gave way to an abandoned field and then more mixed forest of white and red oak, swamp maple, and sassafras. It is interesting to read in the old accounts of the great desirability of the last-named, which was cut in considerable quantities and carried back to England for medicinal purposes. In areas of poorer soil grew plants familiar on Cape Cod, with much huckleberry and cat brier.

Returning to the shore we walked south to search for agate pebbles among the great mass of unsorted boulders of granite, syenite, diabase, porphyry, chert, and gneiss. We passed three small ponds within a stone's throw of high tide and were surprised to find that one was filled with the blossoms of white pond lilies and its shores edged with blue flag plants supporting fat seed pods. Back to the cove again, we observed Piping Plovers feeding along the edges of the receding tide. Herring Gulls and Common Terns wheeled above us in search of small fish in the clear water.

Our boatman returned with a tender at the appointed time, and we enjoyed the trip back to Cuttyhunk via a different course through Robinson's Hole, where we had a glimpse of the old Pasque Island Club buildings, and then along the north shores of Pasque and Nashawena. This variation in routes is to be recommended to all those cruising around the Elizabeth Islands.

On July 19 we awoke to the sound of fog horns. Despite an unfavorable weather prediction we decided to hire Isaiah Tilton to take us to Penikese Island. This is about two miles north of Cuttyhunk and unique in its orientation outside the chain of the Elizabeth Islands. A substantial stone pier provided a good landing place on Penikese, which, incidentally, is a State wildlife refuge. One must secure a permit before trespassing, but once this is shown the caretaker is very cordial to the serious student of natural history.

The island is about a half mile long and a quarter mile wide and has a small adjoining islet connected by a narrow sand bar. Its greatest elevation is 70 feet, and the flora consists mainly of grasses and small plants similar to

those found on Cuttyhunk. The variety of land birds and the abundance of terns and Herring Gulls make a visit to Penikese an unusual experience. Song, Savannah, and Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen in the grassy meadows and Red-wings in the marshy swales. As on the other islands the Bronzed Grackle was a common resident. Dowitchers had already arrived on their fall migration and Spotted Sandpipers ran ahead of us along the pebbly shore.

One very large tern colony is to be found along the northeast side of the main part of the island (see illustration), where a rough count revealed 184 nests in an area 300 feet long and 75 feet wide. It was interesting to note that there were many eggs and chicks at this late date. The nests were sometimes mere depressions in the sand or consisted of a collection of a few twigs placed under pieces of driftwood or in the shelter of a clump of yarrow, peppergrass, or dock. Nests were rarely closer than two feet apart, and no more than three eggs were observed in one clutch. Most of the young seen were only recently hatched, but there were a few chicks about half grown wandering about in the area. As is usual at bird colonies, the adults flew overhead screaming at us, but though they dived constantly they did not strike our heads. As we walked across to the western side of the island we found many nests in the grass, especially at the edges of boulders, and many near the ruins of the old leper colony buildings on the west side. Here and there a half-grown young Herring Gull was being driven away from the tern colony by diving birds.

On a grassy knoll on the northwest end of the island there is a poorly kept graveyard containing three graves marked with headstones and seven others with iron markers only.

The Herring Gull colony is mainly along the southwest shore, where many twig-lined nests were observed but no eggs or chicks. Several half-grown young ran here and there among the rocks trying in vain to hide. Rounding the southern tip of the island, we observed another tern colony with many nests along the sandy and pebbly shore just above high tide. No nests were observed closer than two feet apart and many contained one to three eggs and some had one or two eggs and several young. The colors of the eggs varied considerably: blue-gray, tan, speckled tan and brown, tan and black. One chick was pecking its way out of the shell. As is usual with tern chicks, they always tried to run away from the intruders and hide, and so it seemed wise to disturb the colony as little as possible so that the chicks would not leave the shelter of their own territory.

While waiting for the return of our boatman we identified a Black Duck, cormorant, and loon, and searched in vain in the old wall behind the caretaker's house for signs of Leach's Petrel. Again our skipper called for us as per schedule and returned us safely to Cuttyhunk. The "Tilton Boys" are certainly to be recommended when one is planning sea trips from Cuttyhunk.

The following morning we devoted to the collecting of rocks and the study of the distribution of glacial material on Cuttyhunk. A great variety of igneous and metamorphic rocks was found, including basalt, granite, diorite, porphyry, gneisses, and schists. Cuttyhunk, like the other islands, consists of coarse glacial drift and large erratics which have been carried by the glacier from north of Buzzards Bay. The ridges are small frontal moraines, and similar material forms a thin veneer over a thick layer of sand and clay.

The *Alert* was ready to leave soon after lunch, and with regret we terminated our three-day stay on the islands. One must visit the Elizabeth Islands to really appreciate them, and once visited they lure one back again and again.

Annual Lecture Series



Allan Cruickshank, renowned photographer and official lecturer of the National Audubon Society, will initiate our Annual Lecture Series in Boston and Northampton in February with his portrayal of the rugged Rio Grande Country in "Below the Big Bend." Magnificently picturesque country fired with shifting color from dawn to dusk is the setting of this brilliant wildlife motion picture. As spectacular as the primeval landscape itself are the Ravens, Verdins, Vermilion Flycatchers, Armadillos, and the many other participants in this expedition to a Wild Wild West. Produced in Mr. Cruickshank's inimitable style, this film is not to be missed!

"Trails for the Millions," an adventure with birds in and around New York City, will be given in Worcester. Produced with the same artistry and skill as all of Mr. Cruickshank's work, this picture promises an exciting natural history experience in the heart of the world's greatest city.

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| Boston: | "Below The Big Bend"—New England Mutual Hall, Saturday, February 9, 10:30 a.m. |
| Northampton: | "Below The Big Bend"—Sage Hall, Smith College, Thursday, February 7, 8:00 p.m. |
| Worcester: | "Trails for The Millions"—Horticultural Hall, Friday, February 8, 8:00 p.m. |

Photographer-Naturalist Hal H. Harrison will present the first offering in our Tales of the Wildwood Series for Youth, "Sylvan Trails." Trained in newspaper work for seventeen years, Mr. Harrison later found in free lance work the opportunity he had long wanted—photographing the birds and animals of his native Pennsylvania. This is a delightful portrayal of the Keystone State's wildlife, abounding in such interesting animals as the drumming Grouse, "Stomping Deer," and angry Porcupine, and full of unusual close-ups of grosbeaks, orioles, and others. Children will find especial delight in the stories of "Bambi," the five little Cottontail Rabbits, or the baby Raccoon that goes for a swim. "Sylvan Trails" is guaranteed to charm both young and old.



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| Boston: | "Sylvan Trails"—New England Mutual Hall, Saturday, February 23, 10:30 a.m. |
| Northampton: | "Sylvan Trails"—High School Auditorium, Tuesday, February 19, 7:00 p.m. |

"So Much For So Little"

A New Year of Opportunity

The Audubon Centenary Year has passed into history, an exceedingly interesting and eventful year for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. The Centenary observance in itself opened many doors of service and was the occasion of widespread publicity for the Society and its work. We feel that a great step forward has been made in our public relations throughout the State and beyond, and now, with increased facilities in many departments of our work and the backing of a large and growing membership, we look forward to a year of unprecedented activity and progress in 1952. Our congratulations to every member of our Audubon family for the loyal and continued support that has made possible a great year of achievement. To one and all we extend our best wishes for a Bright and Prosperous New Year.

We are happy to add to the State-wide Membership Committee this month Miss Marian E. Phinney, of Winthrop, to express our very warm thanks to those who have moved their membership up to a higher bracket, and to welcome the following new members to the Society.

Patrons

- Skeffington, Richard W., Salem
- Skeffington, Mrs. Richard W., Salem

Life Members

- **Boyd, John Covert, III, Bethesda, Md.

Contributing Members

- Schaeffer, Ed. G., Holyoke

Supporting Members

- *Cloyes, Mrs. Frank C.,
White Plains, N. Y.
- *Conant, N. H., Dedham
- Contratto, Andrew W., Brookline
- Harper, Mrs. Gale, Waban
- *Holmes, Mrs. Henry W., Cambridge
- Kieran, John, New York, N. Y.
- *Lovejoy, F. H., Concord
- *More, George T., Barre
- *Palmer, Miss Dora E., Wellesley
- Warren, Donald, Dedham
- *Weston, Thomas, Boston
- *Whittles, Dr. Lee J., Glastonbury, Conn.
- *Wright, Mrs. John G., Weston

Active Members

- Arac, Jonathan, Brookline
- Austin, Mrs. Robert, Hyannisport
- Barresi, Richard J., Boston
- Belden, Miss Constance,
Wellesley Hills
- Belmont Hill Lower School, Belmont
- Boyles, Mrs. Abbot W., Greenwood
- Campbell, Mrs. Robert V., Greenwood
- Casselmann, Mrs. T. E., Waban
- Church, Mrs. Alfred W., Camden, S. C.
- Cole, Charles H., 2nd, Lexington
- Comtois, Raymond Arsene, Worcester
- Corneau, Mrs. Barton, Ogunquit, Me.
- *Transferred from Active Membership
- **Transferred from Supporting Membership

- Coupe, Miss Ethel M., Hyde Park
- Crafts, Mrs. Lewis, Great Barrington
- Crockett, Mrs. Horace G., Jr.,
Wellesley Hills

- Crowell, Mrs. Percy C., Greenwood
- Davidson, Mrs. F. Forest, Wellesley Hills
- Dowling, Mrs. Giles, Hyannis
- Duane, Mrs. William, Quincy
- Dunn, Mrs. John A., Wellesley Hills
- Duquette, Edgar, Brockton
- Enwright, Mrs. John J., Greenwood
- Fischer, Mrs. Herbert C.,
Wellesley Hills

- Fritze, Mrs. Ernest B., Osterville
- Furbish, Miss Marjorie, No. Attleboro
- Getting, Ivan, Belmont
- Grant, Mrs. Irving, Quincy
- Holdsworth, Miss Natalie, Weston
- Holmes, Dr. Matthew C., Springfield
- Horton, Mrs. Arthur, Quincy
- Justis, Mrs. Robert, Quincy
- Kleps, E. W., Norwood
- Nicholson, Mrs. Edward F.,
West Hyannisport

- Niles, Miss Marion, Wellesley Hills
- Parker, Miss Cornelia C., So. Lancaster
- Pike, Miss Elizabeth F., So. Dartmouth
- Rand, Stuart, Boston
- Raymond, Edward H., Westwood
- Sanderson, Mrs. Philip, Hyde Park
- Schiff, David, North Andover
- Schneider Ben R., Winchester
- Shelton, A. C., Binghamton, N. Y.
- Stewart, David C., North Scituate
- Syda, Mrs. Lawrence W., Greenwood
- Temple, Miss Emma F., Hyannis
- Trilling, David, Newton
- Walsh, Mrs. J. J., Quincy
- Ware, Mrs. Storer P., Westwood
- Woods, Clarence T., Springfield

Notes from Our Sanctuaries

PROCTOR SANCTUARY. The heavy rains during the first week of November flooded the marsh and swamp areas, creating a great lake which attracted many wildfowl. During the night of the 10th there was a great hatching of spiders, and the marsh grasses were completely covered with webbing. The air was full of "ballooning" spiders and the water surface dotted with them. From the canoe we watched an American Coot feeding on them, and, moving about with its peculiar pump-handle-like motion of the head and neck, it had quite a banquet.

Three Buffle-heads had one particular water hole they were attracted to. During the month four flocks of Canada Geese dropped into the marsh for the night, and throughout the night we could hear them honking. There were many Black Ducks all over the flooded areas, four Hooded Mergansers, Mallards, Wood Duck, and Green-winged Teal.

Apparently there was a good flight of Pine Grosbeaks, as they arrived early in the month and have been present in small flocks about the Sanctuary. The plentiful crop of wild feed, particularly white ash and the flowering crabs, keep them from the feeders. The Evening Grosbeaks have been wild and erratic and have not come in to feed as they usually do. Fox Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, and Juncos are the regular visitors.

Three splendid Red-tailed Hawks on November 12, all in the air at the same time, was an exciting sight. A flock of some thirty Pine Siskins was seen on the 18th by members of the Audubon field trip.

At this writing the open season on deer is in "full bang," and the shots on neighboring property we hope haven't hit any of the deer we have seen here. Perhaps the Sanctuary will eventually be sought by them as a place of safety.

The local Girl Scouts have erected a Pheasant Shelter as a project in their conservation work.

A trail extending from the south of Bradstreet Hill and following the marsh edge and along the esker ridge to the extreme northerly end of the Sanctuary has been completed. This makes a delightful winter walk under beautiful trees, skirting a glade of fine hop hornbeams. Why not come out and walk it?

ELMER P. FOYE

PLEASANT VALLEY. November bird records at the Sanctuary are apt to be rather dull and lacking in variety. Outstanding among the month's records has been the number of Pine Grosbeaks seen. They appeared in the first week of the month and have been seen frequently since then. Usually they have been seen in groups of two to four at a time, but once a flock of eleven was seen budding the cottonwoods near the museum. Their notes are musical and sweet to the ear. Both Pine Grosbeaks and Ruffed Grouse show a liking for the bittersweet which covers the cherry tree in front of the house. On five different occasions from three to five grouse have been seen high up eating these colorful berries.

Soon the beaver ponds will be sealed with ice, and snow will be drifting over our woodland trails and across the open field behind the Headquarters. Already chipmunks and woodchucks have gone into hibernation, and there will be few birds or beasts to be noted. A quiet time, but a beautiful one here at Pleasant Valley.

ALVAH W. SANBORN

ARCADIA. We were rather flattered at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary this month when the mail brought an inquiry from Hemlock, Michigan, on bird feeders and bird feeding. It is routine of course, to answer such questions from members in Massachusetts, both by mail and over the telephone. It is part of the "So Much for So Little" you get as members of the liveliest Audubon Society on the continent. If you think we can help, let us know.

Thanksgiving came during the month. It meant pumpkin pie at the Feast table. The seeds from the pumpkin gave us a chance to share the feast with the birds. Pumpkin or squash seeds are acceptable to the White-breasted Nuthatch and the Chickadee. Let's make it traditional that the birds get the squash and pumpkin seeds at Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Don't forget to cut them in half so they can get at the meaty insides.

The persistent fruits of the Siebold's crab and the Siberian crab attracted a small flock of Pine Grosbeaks, as did crab apples at many other points in the Valley and elsewhere. The Pine Grosbeaks turned to the high-bush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*) when the crab apples were gone. As there was a three- or four-inch snowfall on the ground, the residual matter from the high-bush cranberries made ground at the Triangle Planting appear as though a long and bloody war had been fought. As our crops of persistent fruits grow larger with the years, we can hope to hold winter birds longer.

On November 5, Bob Wood made a rough count of Crows as he patrolled the Sanctuary. He ended the day with a count of about eight hundred. This was a lot of Crows, and their passage was quite a spectacle to watch. On the 9th, we were moving several shrubs into new locations. As this work progressed some five hundred Crows were counted in a very short time. At this point Davis Crompton was pressed into service, and for more than an hour, from 3:30 on in the afternoon, the count of migrating Crows continued. At times the air seemed filled with Crows. They were going past us on all sides, some of them sort of creeping over the horizon at a very low altitude. We were agreed that an awful lot of Crows got away from us. We also agreed that our count at about dusk, when we had to quit, was 1,190. This is a lot of Crows and, as mentioned before, does not include the ones that got away.

Starting at the bottom of the check-list, we find that as the month ended we still had a Song Sparrow and a Whitethroat, as well as the regular species for this season. Evening Grosbeaks were in and out of the Sanctuary without really settling down until toward the end, and from then on two males were regular visitors. The big maple trees have a constant procession of woodpeckers, both Hairy and Downy, coming to peanut butter logs. Also at almost any time there are White-breasted Nuthatches, Chickadees, and, fairly regularly, a Brown Creeper. On the 29th a fine male Flicker was seen looking in an old flicker nest hole. A Great Horned Owl was heard on the 17th and 22nd, and two on the 29th. We have no record of our Screech Owls in November.

Our waterfowl records for November include an American Coot by Mrs. Seth Wakeman, who also saw a nice male Shoveller, both on the 13th. As usual, Black Ducks were our most numerous species, with 250 to 300 being present most of the month. Ten or so Mallards were seen regularly, and one Pintail was apparent the latter part of the month. No Green-winged Teal were recorded after the 13th. We recorded seven Canada Geese on the 25th, seen by Louis Musante, one of our younger bird-watchers. Our biggest thrill of the month was the observation of a flight of Greater Snow Geese, some 750 in number, on November 26, well worth a separate story. EDWIN A. MASON

COOK'S CANYON. Evening Grosbeaks have again returned to the Sanctuary, their numbers heralded by a lone female who dropped in on November 4 to feed on the kitchen porch. The next day she was joined by a dozen of her comrades, and by the end of the month their visits were almost daily, with the number seen at one time varying from twenty to fifty. While recognizing that this is indeed an invasion year, nevertheless the visits of this species to feeding stations in this part of Worcester County seem to be sporadic. Many stations report not having seen a single bird, although they are present at other stations in the town of Barre and their presence is indicated by the questions asked by children in the Audubon school classes.

Through the first couple of days of December almost a hundred birds of this species were banded at the Canyon, but we failed to retake a single one, not only of the three hundred banded here two years ago, but of the better than a thousand birds banded at other stations in the area — such as those of Nields, Marland, and Conkey, whose birds were frequently retaken two years ago. To date only a single banded bird has been recaptured, and that, from a color banding, is presumed to have been banded by Parks at Hartford, Conn., in 1950.

We wonder why one of our first flocks of Evening Grosbeaks refused sunflower seed which was on the tray in plentiful supply in preference to some undetermined seeds of the Moose Hill Mixture. This tendency, we might note, the species later corrected, and they are now consuming sunflower in the usual prodigious quantities. Often on days when the feeders at the Sanctuary are well-laden with sunflower seed, the birds either fail to appear or are present in relatively small numbers as compared with the numbers reported by Miss Florence Read, of Barre, whose feeding station is less than half a mile distant. Yet the Sanctuary's coniferous woodland would appear to offer the ideal roosting place, and if such a roost were used the birds would have to fly almost directly over the Sanctuary feeders en route to Miss Read's. Are the birds which were banded in this region two years ago yet to appear in the area, or have they already wandered this far over a different migration route only to appear in other cities or possibly States? Mr. Parks's bird captured this year is the only bird from that area we have ever taken at Cook's Canyon.

On the whole, however, Evening Grosbeaks feeding at the Sanctuary this year appear to be more contented than they were two years ago. The fact that the banding area is now shielded from the street by a garage and low fence appears to give the birds a feeling of greater security than previously, and if frightened they usually return to feed within a few minutes. Also, the addition of a large feeding table in the new lawn area makes it possible for visitors to observe the birds without frightening those in the banding area. In general, it is most likely that anyone desiring to see the birds and willing to visit the Sanctuary Headquarters for an hour or so in the morning will be rewarded by the sight of at least a small flock of these spectacular birds.

LEON A. P. MAGEE

MOOSE HILL. No comprehensive survey has been made of the probable Ruffed Grouse population on the Sanctuary, but along our woodland trails they have been one of the species most commonly encountered by hikers. Despite whatever quiet or caution one may observe in proceeding through the woods, it is rarely that one sights a Grouse without having been first discovered by the bird itself. So perfectly do the mottled and variegated blacks and buffs and browns of the "Partridge" plumage match the color and pattern

of the fallen leaves and weathered flora of the forest floor that our first awareness of their presence is a noisy whirr of wings from a spot close to our feet. Usually the observer's eye is quick enough to detect the handsomely barred tail as the bird veers from one side to another in skirting obstacles in its line of flight. Occasional birds have been seen crossing the roadway bounding the Sanctuary with an apparent nonchalance and a rate of speed that suggested an exceptionally strong faith in the braking power of the onrushing vehicles. A few birds frequented the headquarters area during the past month, but usually heavy snows and low temperatures are required to bring them up to the residence in numbers.

Following the unseasonably early arrival of the first Evening Grosbeaks at the tag end of October, small groups of these boreal Beau Brummels graced the Sanctuary environs intermittently through the first half of the month. In voluble flocks of three to eight they concentrated on box elder fruits and sunflower seeds with a determination and avidity that left little point to the oft-quoted "an appetite like a bird." After the middle of November the Evening Grosbeaks, for unaccountable reasons, seemed to have disappeared completely and none were reported by any observers. Their unprovoked departure, however, was not long mourned, for welcome but wholly unanticipated replacements were soon forthcoming. The avian void was quickly filled by the sudden arrival of their equally handsome congeners from the north — the Pine Grosbeaks. The first observed occurrence of these kindred seed-eaters was on November 16, when three of them were discovered busily engaged with the dangling fruits of some of the ornamental crabs (*Malus*) planted about the Sanctuary. Other small numbers of Pine Grosbeaks appeared on subsequent days throughout the remainder of the month and feasted on crab apples in the same silent unsuspecting manner as that displayed by the first group. While feeding they showed remarkably little concern or fear of human approach. There were also reports of incursions of Pine Grosbeaks from other places in the Sharon area, some of the flocks numbering up to thirty birds. The majority of these uncommon winter visitors were the more somberly plumaged females and immature, but the color and numerical contrast made the adult roseate males seem especially striking. It will be most interesting to observe what the movements of both Grosbeak species will be like in the wintry weeks that lie ahead.

The relative mildness of the month brought no undue pressure upon the bird life of Moose Hill, and so it is probably not at all unusual to have seen only a few Tree Sparrows about the food trays. The same conditions also make it easy to account for the belated presence of several White-throated Sparrows and a couple of sprightly Song Sparrows near the residence. The Chipmunks have apparently not allowed themselves to be deceived by any balmy temperatures and have retired to the warmth and security of underground quarters, where the harsh and variant disposition of a New England winter cannot greatly disturb their long and heavy slumber.

ALBERT W. BUSSEWITZ

This is a typical letter of a Fifth Grader in the Hawley School, Northampton, addressed to Director Edwin A. Mason at Arcadia Sanctuary.

"The Fifth Grade at Hawley Grammar would like to thank you for the good time we had at Arcadia. What we liked especially was the bird banding and the trip on the trail, the most fun we had was in the barn playing the game, where you see if you can guess the right name for a bird. We also liked the bird houses that looked as though they had television installed."

ELLNISE PRONOWITZ

From The Editor's Sanctum

The Massachusetts Audubon Society was founded in January of 1896. In February of 1917 the first issue of the *Bulletin* appeared, coincident with the coming of age of the Society.

We are proud of the growth of the *Bulletin* as shown in the thirty-five volumes now completed, as we are proud of the many other phases of the work of our Society. The first number counted forty-two pages and was devoted entirely to reports and to a list of the members occupying fifteen pages of small type; this was followed through the year by seven eight-page issues and one issue of twelve pages, a total for the year of 108 pages (including covers). There were no illustrations, and the contents consisted largely of notices, news regarding bird protection, and very brief "nature notes." Volume XXXV required 452 pages, and included ninety-four illustrations.

Our latest issue, of December, 1951, is typical of the *Bulletin* of today, in its variety. There is an article relating to Audubon; "Random Notes" on New England birding; a summer visit to Cuba; a search for an exotic species on Long Island; a schoolboy's reaction to our conservation teaching; reports from our Sanctuaries; six book reviews; four and a half columns of field notes; and various notices of field trips, meetings, and other items of possible interest. What a varied diet!

Our tentative plans for 1952 include printing a second series of "Nature's Calendar" prepared for us by Richard Headstrom. "Notes From Our Sanctuaries" will of course continue, and we hope to develop a series dealing with our very important and unique conservation education program, with contributions from pupils as well as staff members. Book reviews and field notes will be printed as usual. The bird-watcher of sociable habits will find listed each month various field trips under different auspices and to a great variety of favored locations for nature study and observation, and other announcements of interest will appear as occasion arises.

Does such a menu appeal to your taste? Have *You* any suggestions which may better the *Bulletin*? We welcome constructive criticism. Believing that our members are interested, not merely in the protection of birds, for which our Society was founded, but in many other phases of nature and conservation, we solicit articles and illustrative material on all branches of our fauna and flora — on birds and beasts and bugs — on flowers and ferns, tiny mosses and towering trees — the earth beneath or the heavens above — or any other aspect of the great out-of-doors. We need clear glossy prints of your favorite nature photography subjects, common objects as well as rarities. In other words, we want *Your* help in order to make the *Bulletin* what *You* want.

Audubon Field Trips

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27. Trip to Essex County. The usual popular trip for recording winter birds following Annual Meeting of the Society. Chartered bus will leave Audubon House, 155 Newbury Street, Boston, at 8:15 A. M., returning to Audubon House at 7:00 P. M. Bring lunch. Fare and guide fee, \$3.00. Fee for those using private cars and following bus, 75 cents. Reservations should be made a week in advance. Cancellations cannot be accepted after noon on Friday, January 25. Leaders: Davis Crompton, Robert Fox, C. Russell Mason, Miss Dorothy E. Snyder, and Miss Katharine Tousey.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17. Trip to South Shore to Manomet Point. Chartered bus will leave Audubon House, 155 Newbury Street, Boston, at 8:15 A. M., returning to Audubon House at 7:00 P. M. Bring lunch. Fare and guide fee, \$2.75. Fee for those using private cars and following bus, 75 cents. Reservations should be made a week in advance. Cancellations cannot be accepted after noon on Friday, February 15. Leaders: Sibley Higginbotham, Mrs. Ruth P. Emery.

Russell Mason to be Honored by Trustees of Public Reservations

At a recent meeting of the Standing Committee of The Trustees of Public Reservations, Mr. C. Russell Mason, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, was voted to be the recipient of a Conservation Award in recognition of distinguished service for conservation. Those who wish to attend the Annual Luncheon Meeting of the Trustees at the Copley Plaza Hotel on Wednesday, January 23, 1952, at 1:30 P. M., when the award will be presented by President Robert Walcott, may communicate with Mr. Laurence B. Fletcher, Executive Director of The Trustees of Public Reservations, at 50 Congress Street, Boston; telephone HUBbard 2-9184.

From A Younger Contributor

Miss Emily Goode, one of our Audubon teachers in eastern Massachusetts, has brought us this poetic expression from a pupil in the Sixth Grade of the Weston School.

Snakes

Along the roadside as I pass
Snakes are sliding in the grass
Creeping up on little toads
Turns around and in they goes
He eats about one meal a week
And at the end he's thin and sleek.
But in the winter, lazy and fat
Full of toads and things like that
Lolls around just getting thin
Boy, would I hate to be him.
Spring again! and out they come
To eat toads, boy, what fun
Along the roadside as I pass
Snakes go sliding in the grass. BEVERLY FROST

The One-Room School and the Audubon Program.

BY ALVAH W. SANBORN

Have you ever been in a one-room school? The "Little Red Schoolhouse on the Hill" has become a proud tradition in New England, but it has almost disappeared in these days of centralized schools and improved transportation. Fortunately, however, a few such schools still exist, scattered about the beautiful Berkshire Hills where it is my privilege to carry on part of the educational program of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and I have been surprised and most gratified to witness the wonderful spirit of co-operation between the older and younger pupils, and between teachers and pupils.

One of these one-room schools is the Corashire School of Monterey, which is happily situated right on the edge of the woods in that hill town. Great hemlocks and oaks crowd up to the limits of the small school yard, making

it an ideal location for a school bird-feeding program. Furthermore, Mrs. Beatrice Philips, the teacher, has taken kindly to projects which some teachers might think would make a veritable shambles of schoolroom order and discipline.

My first lesson this month, "Birds in Your Backyard," dealt with different ways of attracting birds. A collection of feeders that we made for display at the Sanctuary's Trailside Museum graphically illustrated the different types, their advantages, and their complexity of design. Mounted bird specimens including a White-breasted Nuthatch, a Tree Sparrow, and a Hairy Woodpecker and others loaned by the Berkshire Museum were exciting examples of the possible rewards of feeding the birds. The idea of a school bird-feeding program was discussed, and everyone thought it would be fun to make some feeders and bring the birds to the school windows. Plans were made at the end of the period for assembling the necessary materials and tools so that work could start at once upon my next visit.

Two weeks later when I returned everything was in readiness. A young sapling had been chopped down and cut into lengths for peanut butter feeders, and wire, boards, nails, and tools were all neatly laid out. In no time at all boys and girls were kneeling on the floor and drilling the holes in the peanut butter sticks. Some of the girls were using the tools very deftly, much to the surprise of the boys. Saws and hammers in the hands of two of the older boys quickly fashioned a large window feeder, complete with roof. Other students worked with pliers and hardware cloth to make suet baskets. One girl had brought in a mason jar and with the help of some boys made a hopper-type feeder. When I left at the end of the period all the work was practically completed, even to the staining of the window feeder. On my next visit, as I drove up I found several of the boys on the porch making peanut butter sticks for Christmas gifts. The construction stage of the project ended with the placing of the feeders on the school windows and near-by trees. The next phase will be one of watchful waiting — learning the birds and studying their behavior. Later I plan to demonstrate bird-banding here before their eyes. I feel that here a class project has been begun that will not end with the dying echoes of the hammers and saws.

News of Bird Clubs

At the regular evening meeting of the **HOFFMANN BIRD CLUB** of Pittsfield on February 1, Miss Dorothy E. Snyder will present "Birding in Texas," a talk illustrated by color slides. The following day a field trip to search out winter finches will be conducted by the club.

The **HARTFORD BIRD STUDY CLUB** will hold its Annual Banquet at the Broad Street Y. W. C. A. on Tuesday evening, January 8, at which time Mr. R. A. Paynter, Jr., will show color movies of "The Yale Expeditions to Yucatan." On Tuesday, January 15, "The Trinity Collection of Birds" will be discussed by Mr. William Eblen, and on Monday evening, January 28, the Audubon Screen Tour Lecture "By Erie's Changing Shores" will be presented by Mr. G. Harrison Orleans. Two field trips are scheduled for the month.

Interesting events scheduled by the Waterbury Naturalist Club includes a snowshoe outing around Waterbury on Sunday, January 13, and a bus trip to the Hayden Planetarium and American Museum of Natural History, New York City, on Saturday, January 26.

The **ALLEN BIRD CLUB** of Springfield announces the appointment of Mr. J. Edward Hyde to the office of vice-president and to membership on the executive committee of the Club, to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Robert D. Edwards, who resigned in October to take up his residence in McClellanville, South Carolina. On Saturday, January 19, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Avery will lead a bus trip to Cape Ann.

Congratulations to Connecticut!

At Audubon House in Boston during the summer we received word from Mrs. Betty Long, President of the Westport Audubon Society, that it is now unlawful to shoot any species of hawk or owl in the Nutmeg State. Governor John Lodge signed a bird protection bill to this effect which had been passed unanimously by both houses of the Connecticut Legislature and which places the State among the leaders in conservation of these two misunderstood groups of birds. Up to this time Connecticut had one of the weakest laws in the country in this respect, protecting only the Osprey among the hawk group.

There is a provision in the new law which permits farmers to destroy individual hawks or owls caught in the act of damaging poultry. Only occasional hawks or owls become poultry-killers, and under the new legal setup in Connecticut such species cannot be shot promiscuously because of the misdeeds of a few individuals.

The Hartford Bird Study Group, the Audubon Society of Greenwich, and the New Canaan Bird Protective Society were among the organizations appearing at the hearing for the bill. No opposition was presented.

The public is steadily becoming aware of the fact that hawks and owls have a definite place in the ecological scheme, and that they play an important role in controlling insects and rodents. This is reflected in the better legal protection now given most hawks and owls in most of the States in the country. In Massachusetts all hawks except the accipiters and all owls except the Great Horned are protected by State law.

Trumpeter Swans Increase

Unless the restoration program hits a snag within the next few years, people may stop using the customary adjectives "disappearing," "rare," and "almost extinct," in referring to the largest waterfowl in the United States, according to the Wildlife Management Institute and the Fish and Wildlife Service. The annual census reveals a national population of 535 Trumpeter Swans, the highest count in seventeen years; 159 more than last year and 462 more than in the low year of 1935 when no more than 73 of these magnificent birds could be found.

The history of the Trumpeter Swan offers a perfect example of what modern wildlife management can do when given the funds and resources with which to work. Efforts in preserving the big Trumpeter have centered around the Red Rock Lakes Wildlife Refuge in Montana which was established in 1935 near Yellowstone National Park to save the dwindling remnant from extermination. Since then, birds have been transplanted to other refuges in Oregon and Nevada and to the National Elk Refuge in Wyoming. Increases were reported in all of these transplanted flocks this year.

The Trumpeter Swan, like the American Bison or Buffalo, was a victim of civilization encroaching upon its wilderness habitat. With the destruction of its nesting, resting, and feeding grounds, it declined rapidly, and the restoration program which began in 1935 came barely in time to save the birds from their threatened destruction.

Canada was active simultaneously north of the border in preserving this spectacular bird. In the early 1930's the species was making what appeared to be a last stand in British Columbia and Alaska. Aggressive activity by the Canadian Wildlife Service and its departmental predecessor was responsible

for keeping the numbers above the danger point. Dr. Ian McTaggart Cowan, of the University of British Columbia, estimates that numbers wintering in that province have never fallen much below four or five hundred birds. From this low the population has been built to around *nine hundred*. The Trumpeter Swan is a rugged bird, spending the rigorous Canadian winters in areas where the only open water is that created by the swiftest rapids, and its protection is made difficult by its moving from place to place as occasion requires.

Hope for the Condor?

The huge California Condor, largest of North American birds, is today one of the three rarest birds in the United States, and, like the Ivory-billed Woodpecker and the Whooping Crane, is threatened with early total extinction. Every effort is being made to preserve the pitifully small remnants of these interesting species, and no detail which offers even a possible lead toward their perpetuation is being overlooked.

The *Science News Letter* for June 30, 1951, used as its cover illustration a photograph of a baby Andean Condor, a close relative of our California bird, and published a brief article about this "incubator baby." The chick was then in its third week of life (the photograph showed it at six days), and its survival up to that time had encouraged the scientists at the Zoological Park of San Diego to hope that they can increase very appreciably the chances of increasing the numbers of our North American bird, using similar proceedings. The present chick was hatched in an incubator, and fed especially prepared food treated with digestive aids to supplant the partially digested food which would normally be regurgitated by a parent Condor. Ken Stott, Jr., curator of the San Diego Zoo, is reported as "extremely optimistic" about the survival chances of this Andean chick and the possibility of using similar methods with the California species.

Coming Events at the Berkshire Museum

JANUARY

- January 3-6. 7:00 and 9:00 P. M. Little Cinema. "Tony Draws a Horse." British comedy.
 January 9. 8:00 P. M. Meeting of Berkshire Museum Camera Club.
 January 10-16. Little Cinema. "The Emperor's Nightingale."
 January 11. 7:30 P. M. Opening of course in Silk Screen Technique.
 January 17-20. Little Cinema. "The Galloping Major."
 January 24-27. Little Cinema. "The Jungles of Chang."
 January 31 - February 3. Little Cinema. "The Pool of London."

Brookline Bird Club Trips

Open to Members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society

- | | |
|--|---|
| January 1, all day. Ipswich and Dunes. Leader, Robert Hogg, CRystal 9-3431-W. | January 26, forenoon. Kenmore Square to Leverett. Miss Collins, COMmonwealth 6-5800. |
| January 5, forenoon. Bedford and Lexington Feeding Stations. Mr. Argue, KENmore 6-3604. | February 2, all day. Rockport and Cape Ann. Mr. Little, WALtham 5-4295-J. |
| January 12, all day. Rockport and Cape Ann. Dr. Harris, WINchester 6-3453. Afternoon, Salem. Paul Larcom, BEVERly 1854-J. | Afternoon, Nahant. Miss Riggs, UNiver-sity 4-4229. |
| January 19, all day. Newburyport and Vicinity. Miss Barry, MELrose 4-5888. Afternoon, Mystic Lakes. Mrs. Heston, READING 2-1965-M. | February 9, all day. Ipswich and Dunes. Mr. Jameson, BEVERly 1239-R. Afternoon, Proctor Wildlife Sanctuary. Mr. Kelly, LYnn 2-9024. |

A "Vermin Hunt" Is Poor Conservation.

BY EDWIN A. MASON

Hunters and fishermen who organize or join sportsmen's clubs undoubtedly do so with the best of motives. They wish to maintain an ample supply of fish and game in the waters, fields, and woods, so that their favorite sports can be assured in the future, both for themselves and for generations to come. Because I believe the above to be true, I hesitate to take issue with any such group, but the methods used by some sportsmen's clubs are based, in my opinion, on misinformation or lack of information in some instances. A recently announced "vermin hunt" sponsored by a Massachusetts Rod and Gun Club is so definitely a backward step in wildlife conservation (and my opinion is founded on a careful study of recently gathered information on that subject), that I hereby attempt to bring to the attention of these and other sportsmen some of my reasons for opposing this type of activity.

The profession of Wildlife Management is still a young one, though it has made long strides forward in recent years. The first game bird to be adequately studied in America was the Bob-white Quail, the research being carried on by Herbert L. Stoddard in Georgia and near-by States where the Bob-white is intensively hunted and is carefully "preserved" for its sporting value. This study resulted in Stoddard's well-known book, *The Bob-white Quail*, which is a classic in the literature of Wildlife Management and is a valuable reference book because of its unprejudiced presentation of proved facts.

Stoddard found that even the Blue Jay (one of the "vermin" listed by these Massachusetts gunners, and to count twenty-five points in their "vermin hunt" contest) is of considerable importance to the Bob-white, for Blue Jays often crack open acorns, which the quail could not open, and the Bob-whites profit by the fragments which the jays overlook. And the same is true of squirrels, which are also listed as "vermin" in the gunners' list.

Stoddard's extensive studies demonstrated that the two greatest enemies of the Bob-white in his area were a certain species of ant and a native rat. The rat was not apt to be a menace where foxes and other so-called "predators" were able to control it, and he found that the Marsh Hawk, a bird which is often condemned on very slight evidence and which is a frequent victim of this mistaken prejudice, was one of the most efficient controls of this quail enemy.

"Hawks and owls" were listed at three hundred points in this Massachusetts contest. The laws of the Commonwealth *protect all hawks and owls except four*, the Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Goshawk, and Great Horned Owl. It has been conclusively proved that most hawks and owls are decidedly beneficial toward man in their feeding habits, and even the few species which feed largely upon birds are no longer classed as "bad" by intelligent conservationists, for their destruction of the slow-moving or ailing individuals strengthens the remaining stock by the well-known law of the survival of the fittest. And aside from the fact that the killing of most hawks and owls does more harm than good, it might be quite embarrassing to some of the contestants in this "vermin hunt" if a State Conservation Officer happened by when some of their victims were brought in to be scored. Identification of hawks and owls in the field is often extremely difficult, but "ignorance is no excuse before the law."



Regarding the fox, which is rated at five hundred points in the contest, I quote from *The Fox in New York*, published by the New York Conservation Department:

"The red fox is the best-loved and most hated, praised and berated, wisest, smelliest, daintiest, thinnest, sleekest, most flea-bitten and most controversial creature to occupy the ardent attentions of hound, hunter and hennery owner in the nation! He's a capital asset valued at more than \$14,000,000 to New York in terms of his pelt. His by-products are nearly as numerous as the names called him by most sportsmen. Small game hunters by the thousand believe there should be a bounty on his neck. Orchard owners plagued by mice, want a bounty on those who want a bounty."

You may differ — everyone differs, it seems, when it comes to talking about foxes — but I contend, and I think most fox hunters, farmers, and orchard owners would probably agree with me, that the offering of five hundred points in this "vermin hunt" for each fox killed is not a good approach nor a sensible one to the subject of Wildlife Management or the orderly harvesting of a natural resource.

Some day I hope that the opprobrious term "vermin" will be applied only, as it should be, to parasitic insects such as fleas, lice, chiggers, and ticks. The more we learn about the higher forms of life, the more we realize that all wildlife species are dependent upon each other. They have been living together on this earth for hundreds of thousands of years, and they form interdependent links forged together by the Creator into the chain of life which we call Nature. In view of this, it is not a wise man but a very foolish one who takes upon himself to say arbitrarily, "This creature is good; that creature is bad."

Audubon's Contemporary Admirers—1831

BY LAWRENCE B. ROMAINE

So much has been written and rewritten of Audubon's enemies and of the many obstacles encountered and overcome in at last presenting to the world his *Birds of America* that I thought it might be refreshing to read some of the encouraging, friendly, and even flattering comments of the scientists, authors, and publishers of his own time.

We are indebted to the editor of the *American Journal of Geology* for the following passages here reprinted from the issue for September, 1831. Since it is quite impossible for me to extend my thanks to him in person, the least I can do is to show my appreciation by presenting his comments and those of his contributors to Audubon's friends of 1951. I might add that the *Journal* in its day carried news of all important scientific discoveries and explorations and was well considered the most outstanding periodical in this field. It is gratifying to find Audubon, not only as a valued contributor, but also as a subject of praise and appreciation in its columns.

The following quotations from the *Journal* are chosen as the best examples to demonstrate the views of those who thought well of him.

"Ornithological Biography"

"By John James Audubon, F. R. S. &c. &c.

— Published by Judah Dobson, and H. H. Porter, Literary Rooms, Phila.

"To say that this is one of the handsomest books ever reprinted in America, is to assert one of its slightest merits. The great reputation which Mr. Audubon had acquired as an artist, by the publication of that most magnificent of all works, 'The Birds of America,' has been very much increased, by the work we are now about to notice, which, whilst it is a companion and key to the first, is, itself, an acquisition to any library."

The editor here quotes from Audubon's Introductory Address, upon which he comments delightfully. Since space in the *Bulletin* is limited, I shall assume that most of you are familiar with this introduction — if not, I suggest reading it.

"In the report made to the Royal Academy of Sciences, by Baron Cuvier, is the following passage: 'The Academy has commissioned me with rendering to it a verbal account of the work, which, in one of its preceding sessions, has been communicated to it by Mr. Audubon, and which has for its object, the birds of North America. Its character can be given in a very few words, by saying that it is the most magnificent monument which has hitherto been raised to ornithology.'

"Mr. Swainson, one of the most distinguished naturalists of the age, has said of this work: 'It exhibits a perfection in the higher attributes of zoological painting, never before attempted. To represent the passions and the feelings of birds, might, until now, have been well deemed chimerical. Rarely, indeed, do we see their outward forms represented with any thing like nature. In my estimation, not more than three painters ever lived, who could draw a bird. Of these, the lamented Barrabaud, of whom France may be justly proud, was the chief. He has long passed away; but his mantle has, at length, been recovered in the forests of America.'

" . . . So powerful are the impressions made by these graphic narratives, that we rise from the repeated reading of them, almost as familiar with the subject, as if we had been companions of Mr. Audubon in his many romantic adventures. . . .

"In awarding to him these just praises, we seek to vindicate his claims to the confidence and admiration of his countrymen. . . . We shall hear of no more unfriendly remarks upon the great 'Woodman' of America, as he has been called in Europe, from city ornithologists, who, like Cowslip in the Agreeable Surprise, are most of all pleased with the sight of 'roast duck.'

"Mr. Audubon has in these works shown the world, that nature has not spoken to him in vain, and that he can express the feelings she has inspired him with, with great force. As an author and a naturalist, he has raised himself beyond the reach of that envy and neglect, which are too often successfully directed against genius, ere its plant has grown into strength, and has put forth the blossomed honours, which impose silence even upon detraction. We gathered from his introductory address, that those social honours which have been lavished upon him in Europe, have been denied him, in this, his native country. We imagine it is because he has been comparatively unknown here. Where there are

'To censure, many,
And but few to praise,'

a man wages fearful odds against his adversaries, such as none but the most unequivocal can prevail against. That of Audubon has prevailed, and his native country is, as she well may be, proud of her son. He will hereafter find himself more justly appreciated. It will give him pleasure to learn, that since the recent publication of his 'Ornithological Biography,' the American Philosophical Society has enrolled his name amongst those of its members. We understand Mr. Audubon is soon expected from Europe, to pursue his investigations, and to complete certain departments of his works. We hope on his arrival in his native land, it will somewhat contribute to cheer his heart, to know how much we admire and value his works, and how ready we are to do justice to them."

The editor of the *Journal* has closed his article in a burst of praise which was not dimmed for years to come, as evidenced by his publication of Audubon's letters throughout 1832, and by his further comment in the March issue:

"*Audubon's Birds of America.* — We have very great pleasure in stating, that the merits of this great work are beginning to be understood in this, which is the native country of its author. Before his return here, in September last, there were only five copies subscribed for in the U. States; there are now eighteen. The Legislature of Louisiana has authorized a subscription for two copies, and the Legislature of South Carolina for one. We hope this example will be followed by the legislatures of the other States. One copy of this splendid national work adorns the National Library at Washington."

I wonder if, when he wrote of Audubon, the author could have dreamed how many millions of human beings would live to echo his sentiments.

Last Call for Check-Lists

The dead line for submitting Check-Lists for the 1951 Summary has been set for Tuesday, January 15. Have you sent in yours? *Please list only birds seen in Massachusetts.*

BOOKS — — BOOKS — — BOOKS

The latest and best books on Nature Lore, Natural Science, and Conservation, and Field Guides to all branches of Natural History, including all books reviewed in the *Bulletin*, can be purchased at AUDUBON'S STORE, 155 Newbury St., Boston. A fine assortment for Young and Old, always on display and for sale.

Members of the Massachusetts Audubon Society may write or telephone their orders and open a charge account if desired. And on many of these books Members are entitled to a discount of ten per cent (no discount if marked*).

Reviews of Recent Acquisitions

THE FALL OF THE SPARROW. By Jay Williams. Oxford University Press, New York. 1951. 158 pages. \$3.00.

Here is a conservation book that is different. It is chiefly a story of extinct, extirpated, and vanishing species, why they have disappeared and the chances for survival of those threatened.

Of the more than one hundred unique species that have vanished from the earth, most are gone because of man's carelessness, greed, or meddling. Furthermore, such lack of care and foresight has resulted in the extinction of men such as the Tasmanians, as well as birds like the Dodo and Passenger Pigeon and mammals like eastern panthers and European lions.

Although the theme of the book is quite serious, the author, a free-lance writer with stage experience, writes with an enlivening dry humor which makes for entertaining reading. Satiric drawings by Richard Taylor head each chapter. The introductory chapter by Stanley Edgar Hyman runs in a similar vein. For example, "Interest in extinct species appears to be not without its dangers. Hugh Edwin Strickland, who in 1848 collaborated on the first important monograph on the dodo, *The Dodo and Its Kindred*, was doing some geological investigation in a railway cutting near Retford, England, a few years later, paying no attention to an approaching train. In an instant he had joined the dodo." And, "Ramon Lista, the Argentine politician who claimed to have shot at a giant ground sloth and missed, was beyond dispute shot and killed shortly afterward by a rival politician with better aim."

An interesting section of the book is one on creatures of legend, "Dragons and Dragon-killers," and a final chapter on the influences of man's incursions on and subjugation of primitive peoples. Mr. Williams condemns the scientist who may have been

responsible for the disappearance of the last individuals of a race collected for museum specimens as much as he does the thoughtless layman intent on immediate profits or fun.

Since Alaska is in the conservation headlines frequently because of efforts to place the Bald Eagle on the protective list of the territory, as it is throughout the United States, the author's comment in the chapter "Prices on Their Heads" is particularly pertinent. He writes: "Alaska, which still labors under what one eminent conservationist calls the 'pioneer psychology' — that is, the urge to kill on sight any representative of the wilderness — spent \$100,000 on its wolf-destroying campaign. Among other measures, poison was dropped from planes — which killed every sort of animal except the wolves. The total wolf-bag was 66, which makes an expenditure of something over \$1,600 per beast. The Alaskan wolf may thus be described as extremely valuable as well as rare."

The book concludes with the discussion of the adaptability of man as compared with other animals, which may result in his survival if he uses his sense of responsibility to plan a program of wildlife conservation and cultural adjustments between races of men. He "must learn first of all to adapt to himself."

C. RUSSELL MASON

FEATHERS PREFERRED: A SPORTSMAN'S SOLILOQUY. By W. Austin Peters. The Stackpole Company, Harrisburg, and McClelland and Stewart Ltd., Toronto. 1951. 198 pages and frontispiece. \$3.75.

This is a book for the sportsman rather than for the bird-lover, but it contains considerable food for thought for both. The author has been an ardent hunter from his earliest boyhood days in Ontario some fifty years ago, but he was observant

Reviews of Recent Acquisitions (Continued)

enough and intelligent enough to note with apprehension the progressive diminution in numbers of both waterfowl and upland game which was taking place in both Canada and the United States at that time. As a result, he eventually became convinced that *game management* was the only solution if we wish to maintain even a reasonable abundance of these over-hunted species. But Mr. Peters was not one to stand aside critically muttering, "Let George do it!" He began watching and studying the living birds instead of killing them, and soon devoted much of his time to the breeding of game species, especially waterfowl. He learned much from the game management methods of others, and also worked out techniques of his own. There is much of value to the conservationist in the observations he chronicles.

The first half of the book consists of anecdotes of his early hunting days, frankly retold. In the first chapter he says, "my reminiscences in this book will concern themselves mainly with the urge to destroy by hunting, and the desire to preserve and increase game birds and animals by propagation and good management. The urge to destroy came first. . . . I was reared in an atmosphere of waste and indifference, and I suppose I could hardly be blamed for concluding that the wild animals and birds were there for those who had the ambition and skill to take them."

The second part of the book tells of Mr. Peters's change of attitude toward the wild life of his St. Lawrence River region and of his experiences as a game bird breeder. While we may not agree with his conclusions in every case (such as those in the chapter on "Predators"), they are well worth reading and weighing.

JOHN B. MAY

A GUIDE TO BIRD FINDING EAST OF THE MISSISSIPPI. By Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Illustrations by George Miksch Sutton. Oxford University Press, New York. 1951. xxi, 659 pages. \$5.00.

If I had personally tested the bird-finding possibilities of *all* the places listed in this volume, I could probably find spots which did not come quite up to expectations, but I have read carefully Pettingill's descriptions of many places which I have visited, from Maine to Florida, and my verdict is "Well done." To accomplish what he has done required an immense amount of correspondence and a wide personal knowledge of the entire region of the United States east of the Mississippi

River, coupled with great editorial patience and acumen. Most certainly this volume will go with me on my next birding excursion into new country, classified with my "Peterson," my binocular, and camera as indispensable.

Most of the chapters are devoted to a single State. The introduction to each describes the physiographic regions and the biological communities in the State, with lists of characteristic birds resident, migrant, or seasonal. Then the State is treated by regions with directions on how to reach them from some well-known locality near-by. Wildlife reservations, parks, museums, etc., are listed, and local organizations of bird students whenever possible. The plan of the book was first conceived in 1945, and it has been systematically and capably developed. The book should prove a "must have" for all roving bird-watchers in the region covered. Others will eagerly await its companion volume which will cover the States west of the Mississippi in similar fashion.

JOHN B. MAY

SINGING IN THE MORNING. By Henry Beetle Hough. Illustrations by Will Huntington. Simon and Schuster, New York. 1951. 244 pages. \$3.50.

This is a most entertaining collection of informal essays by the editor of the Vineyard Gazette, nationally known and respected local weekly newspaper. The author and his wife, who jointly edit the newspaper, have been living on Martha's Vineyard since 1920 and have developed a great love for the island. Not only that, but the love of all the out-of-doors and of natural things is expressed throughout the essays in this delightful book.

The seasons are well covered, from the arrival of the early robin and red-wing to summer shade and winter sunrise. The bridal wreath, the Indian pipe, the lindens in blossom, all have their share of the author's attention. Of the sweet pepper bush he says that if the bees "could not make a superb article of honey out of the sweet pepper bush they should go out of business."

Those particularly interested in birds will find much to their satisfaction here, with indigo buntings for Easter and cedar waxwings, bluebirds, gulls, and kingbirds in their season. Like the A. O. U. Check-List, the book ends with the song sparrow.

Do you know what pinkletinks, the beetlebung tree, and samphire are? If you don't, you may find out as you enjoy *Singing in the Morning*. If you already

Reviews of Recent Acquisitions (Continued)

know, read the book anyway, for it will bring you much pleasure.

These essays about Martha's Vineyard are greatly enhanced by the lively pen-and-ink drawings of Will Huntington.

C. RUSSELL MASON

SAND IN THEIR SHOES: A CAPE COD READER. By Edith and Frank Shay. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 1951. 164 pages. \$3.50.

Here is a book for all who love Cape Cod and for all who desire to get acquainted with this delightful part of the country. The Shays have learned what it means to get "sand in their shoes" and become "livers," year-round residents of the Cape. They have drawn only a little from their own writing but have delved into history and literature to gather together a fascinating selection of material, from the early discovery of Cape Cod, through its fishing industry, its beaches, and its ways of making tasty its best sea products, to its interesting bird life.

Cape Cod birds are discussed by Oliver L. Austin, Jr. A most interesting chapter traces the decline of the birds of the region through the days of shore-bird-shooting to the present conservation trend. A warm appreciation and understanding of avian life by the author is evident throughout the volume.

The reader will enjoy the chapter "Cape Cod Beach" by Thoreau and Henry Beston's "Night on the Great Beach" from his *Outermost House*. As would be expected, much is told of the sea and seafarers, including contributions by Herman Melville, Charles Nordhoff, and others. Cape Cod houses and Sandwich glass also come in for their share of attention.

This is a book one may read from start to finish, or it will serve equally well for pickup reading on Cape history, legend, the business of the sea, blockade runners, mackereling, etc., as the mood of the hour dictates. It is a desirable volume for any library in New England.

C. RUSSELL MASON

BIRDS' NESTS OF THE WEST: A FIELD GUIDE. By Richard Headstrom. Ives-Washburn Inc., New York. 1951. 177 pages. \$3.00.

Several years ago Mr. Headstrom published some very interesting material in the *Bulletin* on birds' nests found in Massachusetts. This was reprinted, and the reprints were so much in demand that the author was inspired to expand the material for the eastern States and publish it in book form. His *Birds' Nests* guide has

already been reviewed in these columns. Now comes the companion book covering four hundred birds of the United States west of the 100th meridian, and we find it a most satisfactory companion volume to Mr. Headstrom's first presentation.

The same general plan has been followed in preparing this second book, which divides the text into two parts: Nests On or In the Ground and Nests Above the Ground. These sections are further divided into classification according to environment, size, and type of nest. Mr. Headstrom explains quite thoroughly in the Introduction that birds do depart from the normal pattern, but that as a whole they are fairly consistent and therefore the guide should be of real service. The best references are given where the bird may use several different types of locations, and there are interesting photographs of characteristic nests of the West, as well as an index of the common names of the species of birds included.

Birds' Nests of the West should prove a good addition to the ornithological library of all bird-watchers, and especially of those resident in the western part of the Great Plains to the Rockies and to the Pacific Coast.

The Massachusetts Audubon Society has found these nest guides very useful for the teaching of children in the grade schools, also for use at its Natural Science Workshop for leaders.

C. RUSSELL MASON

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ATTRACTING BIRDS. By Leon A. Hausman. Illustrated by Jackson Miles Abbott and the Author. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 1951. 127 pages, 27 pages of illustrations. \$2.00.

This is another example of *multum in parvo*, for there is a wealth of information in this thin little volume of handy pocket dimensions. It starts out, as so many of us do, by "Attracting Birds in Winter," then there are chapters on the making of bird feeders, bird houses, bird baths; the Plantings That Will Attract Birds; The Bird Tree, Dust Baths, Storm Shelters, Birdbanding, and so forth, and at the end a Key for Easy Identification of Birds Commonly Seen at Feeding Stations, and a list of helpful publications. The illustrations make no pretense at artistic qualities, but they show clearly the points they are meant to bring out and thus demonstrate the old saying, "A good picture is worth a thousand words."

JOHN B. MAY



WILDLIFE in COLOR

by Roger Tory Peterson



Over 450 pictures in full color of American birds, mammals, trees, flowers, reptiles and fish accompanied by fascinating discussion of habits and habitats by a famous

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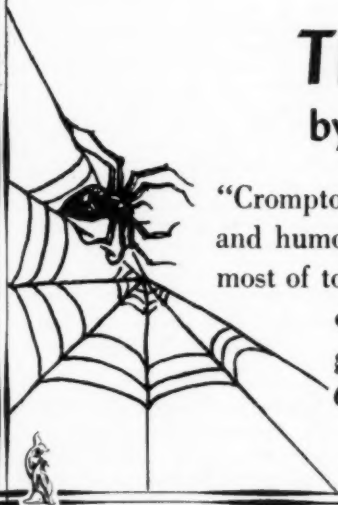
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THE SPIDER

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Chicago Tribune

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Reviews of Recent Acquisitions (Continued)

AMERICAN WILDLIFE AND PLANTS.

By Alexander C. Martin, Herbert S. Zim, and Arnold L. Nelson. With black-and-white sketches and maps. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York. 1951. 500 pages. \$7.50.

There has been a growing need of gathering together the vast amount of information about foods eaten by wildlife as accumulated in the files of the Fish and Wildlife Service, and as published from time to time in various pamphlets and books. And this the authors have attempted to do, and with considerable success.

As the title indicates, the animal foods consumed by birds and mammals in the United States have been given only secondary consideration, though they are mentioned throughout the text, the main emphasis being placed upon the use of trees, shrubs, weeds, and herbs by wildlife. The greater part of the book is introductory, emphasizing the close relationship of each species in a group with its environment and the plant foods found in that environment. It is shown that with the changes occurring in the development of the country some forms of wildlife have declined while others have been able to increase. Although parts of plants may be of value to wildlife, most important, so far as food is concerned, is the seasonal fruit produced by many plants. Plants are likewise of value for cover and for the water which they furnish. In selecting either wild or cultivated plants for landscape or sanctuary work, it is well to keep in mind that many plants will serve a dual purpose.

It is impossible in a text even covering 500 pages to include all of the food plants used by birds or other animals. The emphasis is placed on those preferred and used in greatest abundance, and the comment indicates that use will vary according to preferences, availability, the condition of the fruit or seed, weather conditions, and cycles of production, and that availability, during the winter months is a crucial factor in most parts of our country. The nutritional value of the foods used is certainly of importance, but the animals seem to make instinctive selection where many foods are available. At times when food is scarce they may have to eat less useful materials.

The introductory material includes the effects of birds and mammals on farm crops, whether beneficial or otherwise, and shows how the studies of wildlife foods have been carried out and interpretations made. It is indicated that not only analysis of crop and gizzard content has been

depended upon but also that much confidence is placed in reliable field observations and in examination of scats and pellets.

The second part of the book is dedicated to the wildlife of the country, five chapters being given to birds, one to fur and game mammals, one to small mammals, one to hoof browsers, and a smaller section to fishes, amphibians, and reptiles. The principal foods for each species are listed, ranging from those used only to the extent of one or two per cent of the total food consumed to the more important ones that will constitute fifty per cent or more.

Part Three is devoted to the plants useful to wildlife, including not only native materials, upland weeds and herbs, but also marsh and aquatic plants and cultivated crops such as wheat and corn. Different groups are separated only to genera. This rather limits the information on such groups as *Viburnum* and *Cornus*, of which there are many species, and these of varying value for bird foods. However, there is ample room in the listings of plants to add others from one's own observations or from information gathered elsewhere.

The final chapter lists wildlife plants according to their value. While the authors acknowledge the limitations of this list, as well as of the other material furnished, they are to be congratulated on getting together so much excellent material and with as few errors as represented here. Occasionally a statement has crept in subject to question, such as that "the black-bellied plover . . . nests regularly on our east coast."

Maps showing the distribution of both the animals and the plants are of real value, while the plant drawings by John W. Brainerd and the animal drawings largely by Walter A. Weber are well done and add to the appeal of the text. Here is a book which should be in the library of every sanctuary and refuge area and is of value to anyone planning to establish a wildlife sanctuary on his home grounds.

C. RUSSELL MASON

**Don't Let the Birds Go Thirsty
Even in Winter.**

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At AUDUBON HOUSE

Reviews of Recent Acquisitions (Continued)

THE ELK OF NORTH AMERICA. By Olaus J. Murie. The Stackpole Company, Harrisburg, Penn. and The Wildlife Management Institute, Washington, D. C. \$6.50.

A study such as this is valuable in direct proportion to the amount of time the author has spent in the field both accumulating information and becoming familiar with his animals. In this instance, an extraordinarily experienced field naturalist has given us a thorough account of the animal he knows best. This in itself is sufficient to make the book tremendously interesting. Reproduction, food habits, diseases, parasites, and such similar topics are discussed in detail, but it is the author's vast experience with game management which fits all of these topics into a fascinating picture of what is happening to our elk population and the areas it uses. This is what gives the book a particular flavor of its own and makes it of great general interest to all those interested in conservation. Such of these people who are not versed in the problems of game management will find the detailed discussions of range preservation and the accounts of overlapping food requirements of different species, both wild and domestic, a very real help in forming constructive opinions about the needs of our parks, forests, and wilderness areas. Of special interest to students of mammals are case history accounts of elk behavior, the carefully illustrated descriptions of age changes in antlers and teeth, or the attempt to relate theories of natural selection to what actually happens in an elk herd over a period of years. These and other topics are treated in careful, objective detail and, where possible, illustrated by numerous excellent line drawings and photographs by the author. A more painstaking editor could perhaps have eliminated considerable repetition by condensing and rearranging certain sections and, more important, could have improved the taxonomic chapter, particularly in those instances where the unconventional treatment is actually misleading. Neither of these points detracts from the great value of the book as a whole, and we are fortunate indeed when such an able naturalist gives us the benefit of so many years of observation and experience.

BARBARA LAWRENCE

HOW TO KNOW THE MOSSES. By Elizabeth Marie Dunham. Illustrated by the Author. The Mosher Press, Boston. 1951. 289 pages. \$3.00.

The title page of this handy little volume describes it as "A Popular Guide to the Mosses of the Northeastern United

States, containing keys . . . with special reference to the distinguishing characteristics that are apparent without the aid of a lens." And it is exactly that. It makes no pretense of catering to the scientific bryologist but is designed for the use of the amateur botanist and nature-lover. The author intends to enable the reader to key out eighty genera and over one hundred and fifty species without the use of even a hand lens, and with this limitation the work seems to be as satisfactory as one can expect. For those who are not satisfied with a determination of the genera and occasionally of the species studied, there are other moss guides available and lenses of varying powers and costs, just as a Peterson and a good binocular are needed after one has passed the "beginners" stage in bird study.

The present volume is the same as the original edition published in 1916 with the addition of an Introductory Note and a four-page Addenda listing changes in scientific names which have been made in the past thirty-five years.

STUART K. HARRIS

In the October *Bulletin* a review of *A Laboratory and Field Manual of Ornithology*, by Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr., was presented by Robert L. Grayce, of the Audubon staff. A copy of this *Manual* had just been received at our office from the publishers for review. We took it for granted that this was a revised edition, and the reviewer, assuming this to be so, regretted that there had been no changes in the text.

Dr. Pettingill, an old friend of the Editor's and a loyal member of the Society, writes us that, aside from a very few corrections in the text and alterations in the bibliographies, the contents had not been touched, but that the demand for this volume had encouraged three reprintings, 1947, 1948, and 1950. We are therefore glad to take this opportunity to apologize to Dr. Pettingill for the misunderstanding and at the same time to add our praises of his *Laboratory and Field Manual* to those already accorded it in Mr. Grayce's review. It is a publication that should be in the hands of everyone interested in the scientific study of ornithology.

We are now looking forward to another volume of Dr. Pettingill, the manuscript for which, we understand, is near completion. This is *A Guide to Bird-Finding West of the Mississippi*, which will be a companion work to that just received and reviewed and which deals with bird-finding east of the Mississippi. C. R. MASON

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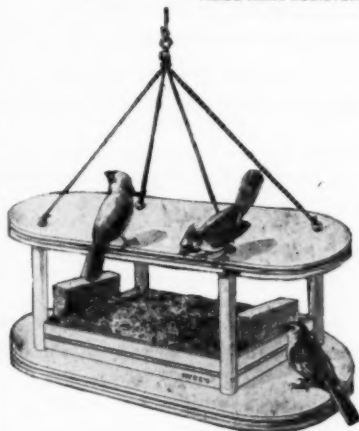
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Field Notes

Mrs. Lawrence B. Romaine and Miss Louise Pratt sent in some interesting records from Middleboro, including a MIGRANT SHRIKE which they noticed in South Carver on November 30, a WILSON'S SNIPER on November 14 in Pembroke, and a lingering VESPER SPARROW in the Hanson Swamp on November 9. And a covey of fourteen BOB-WHITES in the Carver section on November 30 was also a delight.

Allan Hamburg reports seeing a BROWN THRASHER in Newton on December 2.

Visits of CARDINALS are always an event in Massachusetts. David A. Aylward took a picture of a female feeding on the ground in his yard at West Peabody on December 4. The bird had been coming for food regularly since November 26. Mr. Aylward hopes that she will spend the winter and that they will have opportunity to get even better pictures, and in color.

Miss Mabel L. Potter writes that upon her return to Fairhaven from a visit in Florida she found a male CARDINAL at her feeding tray on November 18 and 19.

A MOCKINGBIRD was seen in North Marshfield on November 18 by Frank Jackson.

A CAROLINA WREN was banded in Weston on November 12 by Charles J. Paine.

Mrs. Walter Gropius, of South Lincoln, reports that a late TOWHEE came to the feeder on November 28.

A drake BARROW'S GOLDEN-EYE was seen in Plymouth Harbor on November 25 by Adrian P. Whiting and John Foster. Another was reported from Westport on November 29 by Mrs. Ralph Hentershee and Miss Barbara Proctor.

Numerous reports have been received at Audubon House indicating that we are having a real invasion of WINTER FINCHES this season.

On November 19 Miss Frances Burnett saw a KUMLIEN'S GULL in Rockport and an IPSWICH SPARROW in West Gloucester. On November 26 she saw six DOVEKIES in Rockport.

A very late BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER visited the feeder of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Thatcher in Middleboro on November 25 and 27.

A female SHOVELLER was seen in Boston (Muddy River), near the Art Museum, on November 30 and was still present on December 6, but Miss Alice Hanson reports that it has not been seen since.

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Field Notes

Mrs. John C. G. Loring saw a very late BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER in Duxbury on November 20.

A WESTERN TANAGER was seen in Lakeville at Little Quitticas Pond on November 22 by Adrian P. Whiting.

Mrs. C. Eaton Pierce, of Hingham, called to say that two DICKCISSELS appeared in her yard in a flock of English Sparrows on November 20 and were still present at the end of the month. Mrs. N. L. Hatch, of Exeter, New Hampshire, writes that a Dickcissel came into their sparrow trap on November 22. The bird was quite wild and uncomfortable while they examined it, but an hour later it was back in the trap again.

Mrs. Gerald Fitzgerald, of Amsterdam, New York, continues to have many birds coming to her sanctuary, and many of these have been banded. She had her first EVENING GROSBK on October 6, and by the end of the month they were steady, daily visitors. In November, at her own station and at that of a friend about ten miles away, she banded over two hundred of these birds. Of the close to one hundred CATBIRDS which Mrs. Fitzgerald banded during the summer of 1950, twenty-one returned in 1951. Sixty-five new Catbirds were banded this past year.

On November 27 we had the following report on EVENING GROSBKs from Miss Eleanor E. Smith, of Suffield, Connecticut: "The Evening Grosbeaks appeared first here on Oct. 26th when a flock of about a dozen lighted in our box elder and feasted on the seeds. The next day a single bird was seen. No more were seen until November 19, when a lone female appeared and acted very much at home at our feeding station. She left and came back with two males. Later in the day more males appeared, making six in all. But the next day there were only four, one female and three males. They have been here ever since, the number being either three or four each day, but always just one female. None of the birds are banded."

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Motley, of Milton, write: "On November 21 we had a flock of about 10 PINE GROSBKs feeding on a crab apple tree in our garden, females, males, and juveniles. They were completely fearless and tame, so that we stood right under the tree and watched them almost within reach of our hands. With the sun on them their colors were brilliant. They pulled off the soft fruit and worked out the seeds, dropping the pulp to the ground. They were there before and after dinner."

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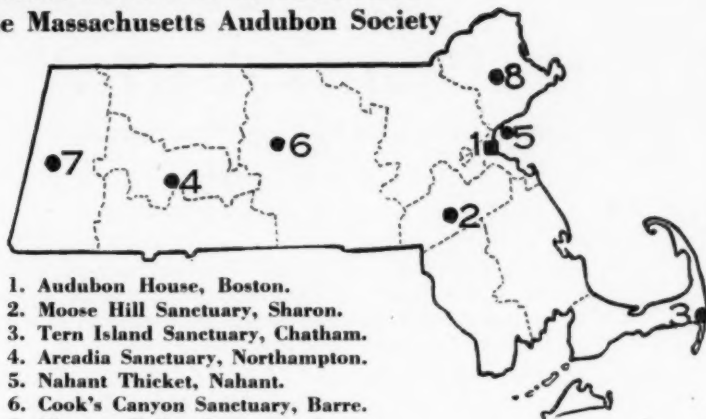
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